

PLUCK AND LUCK

COMPLETE STORIES OF ADVENTURE

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Price 7 Cents

YELLOWSTONE KELLY; A STORY OF ADVENTURES IN THE GREAT WEST.

By AN OLD SCOUT.

ADVENTURE STORIES



Although our friends fought and struggled manfully, they were strapped firmly, each on a wild, kicking, struggling steed, which half a dozen Indians could scarcely hold, with their heads toward the heads of the animals. Old Yellowstone Kelly was tied on the white horse.

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STORIES OF ADVENTURE

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YELLOWSTONE KELLY

—OR—

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CHAPTER I.

INDIAN SIGN.

"Hello hyer, wake up, ye young snoozers! D'ye intend to sleep all day?"

"Hello, Kelly, what's the matter?"

"Wake up, blast it; don't you know the sun's up?"

"Well, who cares?"

"Chaw me up fur buffler meat ef I believe you care, but ef ye expect to git fur to-day it's time ye war up and rubbin' the dew off yer rifles. They mought rust."

"I hope we'll have use for them, so they will not rust."

The last speaker was a boy between seventeen and eighteen years of age, with blue eyes and brown curly hair. The man who had been using the broad Western dialect was fully six feet tall, with broad square shoulders, long red hair, and short sandy beard over his face. He was dressed in hunter's costume, with cap of the fur of an animal he had caught himself, and the hunting-jacket and trousers also of the skin of animals he had shot, fringed after the Indian style. Instead, however, of the moccasin, he wore heavy cow-hide boots with thick soles to protect his feet from the sharp rocks.

A third youth, with dark gray eyes and black hair, had risen, and was putting on his hunting-jacket.

Though the two boys were dressed very much after the hunter fashion, neither had much the air of Western youths. They looked more like youngsters out on a frolic than those whose young lives had been passed on the plains.

"I declar', Tom Blake, you are jist as sleepy-headed as if ye war in the settlement," said the tall man, whom the boys called Kelly, and who was no less personage than the famous hunter and scout, Yellowstone Kelly.

"Well, there isn't any danger, is there?"

"No danger? Why, boy, yer never sure o' yer h'ar when out on the plains."

"But the Indians are all at peace."

"Yes; war yesterday, but who knows what they ar' to-day. Ye just can't tell one minit what the darned, sneakin', cowardly thieves are goin' to do."

"You haven't a very high opinion of the noble red man, Yellowstone," said Tom Blake.

"Noble red nothin'. He's a jackal, a copperhead, a dirty rattlesnake, a sneak, a thief."

The boys were now dressed, and left the small tent which had afforded them shelter for the night.

A campfire was burning near having been replenished by Yellowstone Kelly. Three rugged ponies, called mustangs, and a pack-mule were picketed near, and grazing on the short green grass.

The old hunter had left the door of the small tent, and was now engaged in cutting off slices of steak and broiling them on the coals. The boys, to whom this outdoor life was a novelty hurried down to the spring of clear cold water near, to wash themselves and arrange their toilet before this nature's mirror.

"Isn't this jolly, Hank?" said Tom, drawing a small pocket-comb and trying to straighten out his curly hair.

"Yes; but somehow I don't know that we are exactly doing right."

"Why, did not our fathers send us out here to spend the vacation, and recuperate for next term at college?"

"Oh, yes, of course; but I don't suppose they thought of us going out on the frontier."

"Everything is peaceable—the Indians are not on the war-path, and we can have a nice hunt and get back all right. I wish we could have a brush with Indians; we might have an adventure."

"So do I," said Hank.

"Ain't you glad we came?"

"Oh, yes; it's such fun."

"Fun is no name for it. It is just too splend'd."

"I say, thar, you youngsters hed better come on to breakfast ef ye expect to git any. I'm goin' to pack up an' be movin' soon."

"What's your hurry, Yellowstone?" asked Tom, as they walked up to the large clean stone on which lay the broiled venison and cold bread.

"Hurry! Ye don't want to be here all summer?"

"No, of course not."

"Then eat."

"Comehow, Kelly, you seem nervous," said Hank Morris, fixing his gray eyes on the hunter and scout.

"Two sich young rattle-heads ez you ar' is enough to make a grizzly git narvous."

"You haven't seen anything to frighten you, have you?" asked Tom, mischievously.

The old hunter turned his weather-beaten eyes upon the youth with a look that was comical, and said:

"Ye don't want to rile me, do ye, kid?"

"No."

"Ef ye war to rile me, I'd jest chaw ye up in no time. I kin eat a pair o' kids like you'n's any time."

"Oh, we don't care about being eaten up," said Tom.

"Then don't go to talkin' about me bein' scart. When I git scart, it'll be the time fur you chaps to crawl into a prairie-dog's house and hide."

The boys laughed, and Yellowstone Kelly haw-hawed in his hearty Western manner.

"I am glad to hear you laugh," said Tom. "But, Kelly, tell us now, did you really ever get scared?"

The old hunter shrugged his shoulders, winked at the boys, and said:

"Don't exactly know, boys; I've felt kind a-striped a time or two. Dun know whether ye'd call it scare or not. When I git to feelin' that way I'm wuss than when I'm all right. I'm a reg'lar catamount, a tornado, a buffler bull, screamin' painter, and Kansas cyclone all in one I tell ye, boys, when I git scart, I am a terror."

"I hope we will see you scared, then, before we get back," said Tom.

"I hope ye won't, 'cos I don't git scart easy, and I don't want either of ye youngsters to git in trouble."

"You wouldn't hurt us, would you, Kelly? You'd know what you were doing?"

"Oh, yes, ye bet I allers I know that; but then there's brimstone danger near when I do git scart. But see hyer, you boys are done eatin', let's saddle up and be goin'."

The old hunter sprang up with an alacrity and skill which can only be acquired on the plains. He gathered up the scanty cooking utensils, and in a few moments had everything neatly packed away on the mule. The saddles were put on the restless mustangs, and the tent folded and placed on the pack-mule.

The tent itself was a very small affair, and the three men could just get under it.

Yellowstone Kelly rode in advance of the boys, and notwithstanding his humorous manner toward them, his brow was clouded and anxious.

"Ther infernal redskins ar' jest like as not out on the warpath," he muttered to himself.

He did not tell the boys that, while they slept the night before, he had left the tent and crept away to the west about two miles, where his experienced eye told him a campfire was burning—that there he found a council-fire, around which were congregated thirty savages. All were well armed with rifles, tomahawks, and scalping-knives, and wore pistols at their belts.

They had assumed the war-paint.

"What the thunder's up wi' them redskins, I don't know, but I kind of feel it in my bones that we are goin' to hev some trouble afore we git over wi' this. Them young kids can't always be depended on in a scrimmage, but, howsomever, we'll do the very best we kin."

He rode on in solemn silence. The boys noticed that their guide took great precaution to keep in the low ground. His eyes also wandered about curiously over hills and plains, as though he were expecting to see some one.

They came, about noon, to a small stream covered with a thick growth of wood. There was a little valley just back from the stream, covered with tender grass.

"Hadn't we better camp here?" asked Tom.

"No," said the scout.

"Why?"

"'Cos we've got to git beyond that ar' streak o' timber afore we stop."

"Kelly," said Tom, "your conduct is rather mysterious. You have been silent all morning. What is it?"

"Injuns."

"Well, what of them?"

"They're not far away from here."

"How do you know?"

"How d'ye know what's in a book but by readin' it? I know what's in this country by readin' it. I read that thar ar' Injuns near."

"They are friendly, though."

"Don't ye depend on a redskin's friendship," said the old guide. "D'ye se that streak o' timber ahead?"

"Yes."

"Waal, now, I wouldn't be a bit surprised ef we hear bullets an' arrers whiz afore we git across that streak o' woods."

"Why, Kelly," said Tom, laughing, "are you in earnest?"

"I am. Keep yer rifles and pistols ready; thar may be more fun hyer than you boys expect."

The eyes of the boys were sparkling with enjoyment. They almost gleamed with pleasure at the prospects of an adventure.

They held their rifles across the pommels of their saddles, and their eyes wandered toward that dangerous glade.

Riding in single file down the banks of the creek, they halted a moment at the water's edge to allow their horses to drink.

"Boys," said Yellowstone Kelly, in a hoarse whisper, "thar's Injun signs here, sure as yer born."

"Where?"

"Look thar!" and he pointed to the print of a moccasin.

They hurried across the shallow stream, the bed of which was covered with smooth pebbles, and began to ascend the bank.

Crack!

Sharp and keen the report rang out on the air, and the bullet clipped the hair of the old hunter.

Turning in his saddle, the old hunter brought his rifle to his shoulder.

The boys turned their eyes in the direction indicated by the rifle muzzle, and just caught a glimpse of a dark, hideously painted face peering out from the bushes.

Only a single instant did they look, then a report shook the air, and a stream of fire belched forth from that dark muzzle.

A wild yell came from the thicket, and a heavy body plunged back among the bushes and tall grass.

"Good for you!" cried the reckless Tom. "You've plugged him, sure as fate. Hurrah for Yellowstone Kelly!"

"Shet up yer tater trap, or I'll slap ye off yer pony. I tell ye thar's Injun signs. Come on ef ye want to save yer ha'r."

Whipping up the pack-mule to a run, they galloped over the hill, as an arrow and two more rifle-shots whistled over their heads.

CHAPTER II.

JUGGLING THE REDSKINS.

"Them pesky redskins hev allers got a hankerin' arter ha'r," cried Kelly, as he reloaded his rifle going at a gallop. "I guess one o' the cussed varmints got about 'nough o' it."

"You certainly done it for one," said Tom. "I wish I could get a shot." He was looking back as he galloped over the plain, hoping to get sight of an Indian's head.

"Don't go to shootin' until ye ar' sure ye'll knock yer man."

"I will not."

Crack!

Crack! came two more rifle-shots from the bushes in their rear, the balls whistling through the air near the heads of Tom and Hank. The boys could not help dodging.

The old hunter laughed.

"Ye'll git used to them kinder songs, lads," he said.

"I thought you said the Indians were not on the warpath?" cried Tom.

"They warn't yesterday, but they ar' to-day. Ye can't never depend on a sneakin', thievin', cowardly red nigger—darn 'em! Don't shoot, boys. Wait till they come out o' the bushes, and then be sure o' yer man when ye do pull trigger."

They were riding more slowly up the sloping plain, for they were almost beyond rifle range, when suddenly there burst from the thicket a large, powerful savage.

"Now's my time," said Tom.

The youth wheeled his horse half way around, so that he was broadside to the Indian. The others reined in their horses.

"BeB keeful; take aim, and knock the black spot off the cuss!" said the old hunter and trapper, as he saw Tom bring his rifle to his face.

There was a white puff of smoke from the Indian's gun, and the bullet, a moment later, whistled through the air.

Tom did not flinch, but, holding his rifle with an aim steady as an iron vise, pulled the trigger.

The sharp, keen report was followed by a howl of pain, and the savage was seen to drop his gun and clasp his hand to his side, run a short distance toward the bushes, and fall.

"Plugged it to him, by the Jehosaphat!" cried the old hunter. "Come on, boys!" he added, wheeling his horse about and galloping over the hill. "Ye'll hev it lively now. Load up, Tom; ye did mighty well that time, and I reckon ye'll make something o' a repertation out here."

They galloped over the plain, and were soon out of sight of the Indians.

An hour passed and all was quiet. The manner of old Yellowstone, however, impressed his young companions not a little. He was silent and watchful.

Well he might be. His long experience on the frontier told him that their dangers were not yet over.

Day by day week by week, and month after month had the savages been known to follow a trail, and at the most unexpected moment pounce on an unsuspecting victim. They would be on their trail in increasing numbers, he was certain.

In a narrow ravine our three friends halted for half an hour to allow their horses to graze and rest, and then mounting again pushed on.

"Boys," said Yellowstone Kelly, "I'm a'most doggone glad o' one thing, an' that is that you are made o' the right stuff. We ar' goin' to need grit."

"Do you think they will follow us?" Tom asked.

"Foller us? To be sure they will. We'll hev the darnedest fight ye ever heerd on afore twenty-four hours. Mayhap we'll git our h'ar riz an' go under, but we'll throw some o' them dernation savages down fust, see ef we don't."

It was nearly sundown when they saw a large party of Indians three or four miles in their rear, coming after them at a sweeping gallop.

"You are right," said Tom, his face growing a little pale. "We will have trouble."

The boys then thought of their far-off homes in peaceful lands, where they had left their parents, and almost wished themselves back. Would they live over this vacation and ever enter college again?

Yellowstone Kelly drew from his capacious pocket a large plug of pig-tail tobacco, and, taking a huge bite off it, said:

"May I be rattlesnake-bit, cat-howled, and chawed up fur buffler meat ef them varmints won't repent it ef they rile me."

"They are chasing us, Kelly."

"Yes; but we'll be ready fur 'em. It's only 'bout a mile to the Stone Jug."

"What was the Stone Jug?" the boys asked. It was a house built of stone, cabin size, and covered over with slate-rock. It was really a small fort, and here two or three men could successfully combat the Indians for several days.

"I helped build it myself," said the old mountaineer. "Thar's a spring o' good water in it, and we'll hev plenty loop-holes to shoot through."

Just at dark they reached the Stone Jug. It was merely a cabin made of large blocks of stone, with port-holes just as high as a man's head.

The door was so low they had to stoop as they went in.

"What will we do with the horses?" Hank asked.

"Leave 'em out. We can't take 'em inside, 'cause there's no way to get 'em in, or room, if we did."

The horses and mule were tethered within a few rods of the house, and our friends went in.

There was some furniture there, a rude bed of skins, and a jug which had at one time contained liquor. Yellowstone Kelly said he had been here but a few weeks before, and knew where many useful articles were concealed, among them a keg of powder, which was in a cache in the ground.

They closed up the door with a great flat stone, which they placed in front of the door.

They ate supper, and one mounted guard while the others slept.

All night long they kept watch, but not a single Indian showed his head.

"They're not gone off," said Yellowstone Kelly. "Ye needn't go to feedin' yerself up with the fancy that the red niggers hev given us up. Ye'll find yerself much mistaken ef ye do. They hain't by a jugful."

"The horses need water," said Tom.

"Yes, and they ought to be changed to another place where they can get better grass," said Hank.

"I'll go," said Tom.

"N—no, I guess ye'd better not," said the old scout, chewing his cud of tobacco with zeal. "The red niggers'll be on the watch o' ye, an' ye might git gobbled up."

"Some one must go."

"I ruther expect that ar duty 'll devolve on yer humble sarvint—that's me," said Kelly. "You two fellers are greener nor half-grown pumpkins, and you'd better stay here, keep yer guns cocked ready to shoot the fust red nigger ye see."

Divested of all arms save his pistols and knife, Yellowstone Kelly puled the stone slab aside and went out.

Tom at one port-hole, and Hank at the other, watched. They trembled for their old scout, who walked boldly about, gathering up the horses and leading them to a small rivulet to drink. All had been watered saye the mule, and he took that down last.

Suddenly Tom thought he saw something move. He looked closer. It was down close to the bank of the creek. It was moving. What was it? It seemed like an animal.

It had feathers. It was crouching.

"Run, Kelly, run!" shouted Hank, who had discovered the same object.

There could be no mistake now, and as Tom's gun was already on the dark-moving object, he pulled the trigger.

There was a yell of agony.

It sprang into the air.

It was an Indian.

Yellowstone Kelly tried to bring the mule back, but we all

know how stubborn a mule is when one gets in a hurry. As the scout pulled forward it pulled back.

Crack!

Crack!

Crack! came the rifle-shots from the woods, and bullets and arrows whizzed most uncomfortably near the old scout's head.

He was forced to abandon the mule and run for the house. Wild yells rose on the air, and a shower of bullets and arrows whizzed about the old scout.

He had drawn his revolver, and, wheeling about, saw five or six of the Indians but a few feet away. Even as he raised his pistol and pulled the trigger

Bang!

Bang!

Bang! Two were down and another hit. The wounded Indian hobbled away, holding his hand to his hip where the shot had struck.

Without a moment's hesitation Kelly dashed up to the house, and went in.

"Hyer, one o' ye help roll this flat rock agin it, and we ar' safe. No—only one; ther other shoot."

Tom sprang to Yellowstone Kelly's aid, and Hank, who had a repeating Winchester rifle, fired as rapidly as he could.

His aim was so good that he killed one outright, and wounded several others.

"Now, my lads," said the old hunter, "we're goin' to give 'em thunder." He took up his rifle, and killed an Indian two hundred yards away.

Our friends had been able to protect the horses, but the stubborn mule had been captured and dragged away.

For a few moments the fight was severe. But old Yellowstone was getting his blood warmed up. He loaded and fired his rifle with such marvelous rapidity and effect that the Indians withdrew to consult upon some plan.

"What are you doing, Kelly?" Tom asked, as he noticed Yellowstone busy with the jug.

"I'm goin' to jug them darned red niggers," growled Kelly. He drew the cork out of the jug, and filled the jug itself with gunpowder, gravel, sand, and bullets. There were several inches of fuse in the cabin which had been used for blasting rock.

The ingenious hunter thrust this in the jug, connecting one end with the powder, then packed bullets around it, and filled it up to the throat with sand and gravel.

"We'll hev 'em back here soon, thick as hops," said the old hunter. "When they git round us I'll light the end o' this and drop it among 'em. They like whisky."

The boys laughed.

There was little time for further speculation. The Indian consultation broke up, and with wild yells they came screaming about the stone cabin.

"Git ver guns an' give 'em thunder!" cried the old hunter.

Crack!

Crack!

Crack!

Each shot was a death. The Indians did not stop, however, but came on with louder yells of vengeance. Their plan was now apparent.

Their daring impetuosity carried them with a rush to the stone hut.

The bullets from their pistols mowed them down. The fight was hot, but the impetuosity of the savages carried them to the very door, which they assailed with their hatchets.

"Give 'em thunder," roared the old hunter, stooping down and striking a match.

He held the match to the fuse sticking through the perforated cork in the jug. Then he took up the jug and watched the fuse fizz and burn into the cork, and tossed the jug through a narrow window among the Indians gathered near.

"Whisk!" one was heard to cry, and there was a scramble to see who would get it first.

Suddenly a tremendous explosion shook the air, and the stone hut trembled. Some of the Indians were blown to pieces, and the sky for a moment darkened.

CHAPTER III.

AN ENCOUNTER ON A LOG.

Cries and yells of pain and dismay filled the air.

"By gravy, I guess some o' 'em is hurt," said Yellowstone, with a quiet chuckle. "He, he, he! the infernal cusses to

think as how they would come in on us in that way. Guess they've got their eyes opened."

Tom was at the port-hole trying to see the effect of the explosion. The smoke had formed a dense cloud about the stone cabin.

Small gravel and sand were still falling in a little shower. Now as the smoke in great patches rolled away he caught sight of moving arms and legs on the ground, and struggling masses. There were also partially revealed two or three Indians running away for dear life.

The shouts and cries of alarm in the distance convinced him that the whole gang were in flight.

"What d'ye see?" the old hunter asked.

"But little as yet."

"Too much smoke, eh?"

"Yes."

"Guess it did make some clouds, but then the thing burnt as well as scart."

In a few moments the wind swept the smoke away, and our friends in the stone cabin saw the ground about the door strewn with writhing, struggling savages, wounded from the explosion.

Two or three were killed outright either from the boys' pistols or the contents of the jug.

Many of the savages were helplessly powder-burned. Some had their eyes put out. Some were insensible; others too badly hurt to get away.

"Roll back this 'ere stone quick!" cried Yellowstone Kelly.

The boys did so. Armed only with his knife, the intrepid hunter sprang through the opening and began plunging his keen blade to the hearts of the wounded savages. It seemed cruel, but it was the only means of purchasing their safety, as the boys afterward learned.

The Indians who had retreated pell-mell from the explosion now halted, and began shooting at the hunter.

"Come in, come in, come in!" screamed the boys, but Kelly's blood was up, and he shouted:

"Not much, until I've lifted the ha'r o' some o'these darned cusses."

In a few minutes he returned with no less than five, and as many dead Indians lay out upon the ground.

"Do you think they will go off now?" Tom asked.

"Not they," said the old hunter, dryly. "We ain't seen the last o' them Iniuns by a good deal."

"Do you think they'll charge us again?"

"No."

"What then?"

"Jest lay siege and starve us out."

"But may not help come?"

"Not likely—we're in a fix."

Hank Morris, who had been looking about him, suddenly cried:

"Where are the horses?"

All eyes were turned in the direction where the animals had been tethered, but they were nowhere to be seen.

"The cussed Injuns hev got 'em," cried the hunter.

"They are gone," said Hank.

"Can't you get a sight of them?" Tom asked.

"No."

"I do; I see my black pony."

"Where?"

"Down there in the bottom," said Tom. "An infernal Indian is just about to mount him."

Tom cocked his gun.

"What are you going to do?"

"Shoot the savage."

A moment later a warrior had dared to vault on the back of the pony, and Tom's rifle was in a moment at his face. The sharp whip-like crack report rang out, and the Indian fell to the ground.

The horses were then led away.

All the remainder of the day a sharp fire was kept up.

Yellowstone Kelly became sullen and morose.

The firing was low, but effective. Three or four more of the savages had been hit, and each of our friends had a bullet-hole or two in his clothes, the result of Indian marksmanship.

"Boys," said Yellowstone gloomily, as night came on, "it ain't no use—we'd jest as well know all. We've either got to git out o' here to-night or our lives won't be wo'th two cents a bushel."

"Our condition is serious," said Tom.

"Serious nothin'," cried the old hunter. "We've jest got to whar chances are ten to one agin us."

"Do you think so?"

"Know it."

"Well, we will die like men," said Tom, nobly.

"Now, boy, give me yer hand. By jemany crout, I like to hear a boy talk that way, an' ef a feller goes under and gits his ha'r lifted in sich company, why he could go in some comfort, ye know."

"We can at least make an effort to escape," said Hank.

"Yes; and ye bet we'll make it. We may shuffle it through yit."

As night came on the Indians grew bolder and drew nearer and nearer the beleaguered men. They fired at them again and again, and hit two or three of them, but the savages were so determined and kept so well under cover that it was almost impossible to kill them.

"The night's going to be dark as a stack o' black cats," said the old scout. "One can't tell a nigger from a tree, I don't expect."

"Will it not aid us?"

"Don't know; perhaps it mought, and then agin perhaps it moughtn't."

The night was so dark, and it was so still when they rolled away the stone, that no object without could be seen or heard.

"Boys," whispered the old scout, "sling yer rifles on yer backs, an' take yer knives only in yer hands. Then creep along arter me. Don't fire a shot ef it kin be helped. If it can't, use revolvers; rifles ain't no good in sech work as this 'll be."

Our hardy old mountaineer passed out, and a faint whistle announced that he was safe; Tom came next, and Hank Morris last.

This much was gained without any noise or sign of an enemy. Somehow the boys began to hope they had retired, but the old scout knew better. They moved slowly off from the house, half creeping, and half walking.

Every few moments they paused to listen.

Once they thought they heard the heavy breathing of Indians as they crawled up to the house, but they kept away from the suspicious sound. The very boldness of their plan had safety about it.

Indian sentries were out, but they managed in some way to avoid them.

On and on they went into the woods and thicket, until the boys were sure they must have gone five or six miles.

"Boys," said the old hunter at last, pausing near a big tree, "we give 'em the dodge fur once, but I swar I don't see how."

"Nor could I," said Tom. "It was so dark."

"Yer sharp," said the hunter.

Hank laughed.

"Waal, boys, the creek is ahead, and we've got to git across."

"Can't we get our horses?"

"No; they've got 'em, an' now we must foot it."

"All right; I shan't complain," said Tom.

"Nor I," answered Hank.

"Waal, you ar' both plucky boys."

"I'm glad you like us."

"I do like ye both mighty well, boys, an' I'd hate to see ye ro under."

"We hope none of us will go under. But how are we to cross the river?"

"There's a log—it's the only plan."

"How far is it from here?"

"Half a mile up."

"Lead us to it, and we will soon be in safety."

"Come on, and mind yer eye; it's dark as ink here, an' we're not out o' the woods yit."

They went on, creeping through the woods slowly and carefully, and after half an hour's wearisome crawling came to the creek. Here they found the log. Dark clouds were over the sky, and a slight rain was falling.

"Come on, boys—be keerful," said Yellowstone Kelly, stepping on the log.

He went first, and the others followed close after him. The banks of the creek were high, and in the fathomless depths below could be heard the rush of waters.

When about half over Yellowstone Kelly said:

"Stop!"

At this moment a vivid flash of lightning lit up the scene

Half a dozen Indians were on the other end of the log coming toward them.

At this moment Yellowstone Kelly met their leader, grappled with him, and hurled him down below, and seized the next.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FAIR CAPTIVES.

The boys only caught a single glance of the savages during the flash of lightning. The next moment it was gone, and all was in utter darkness.

They heard the quick, silent struggle.

"Splash!" went a body far below.

"Who was it had fallen in the conflict?" the boys could not help asking themselves.

They could not see whether it was Yellowstone or the savage.

But a moment later they heard another struggle.

"It is Kelly who is victor," whispered Hank, who was close behind Tom.

"Yes, but he's got another."

"There's half a dozen more."

"Can't you shoot one of them?"

"No; it's too dark."

"Can we do nothing?"

"No; it is so dark we hardly dare move. We may do our friend more harm than good."

"And this log is so slippery I can hardly hold my feet on it."

"A fall is death!"

"Good heavens, how they struggle!"

It was evident that two powerful men were scuffling and fighting.

The log was so long that it swayed back and forth.

Tom took a step forward, and to his great joy found a projecting limb extending out of the side of it, affording a slight recess at the side.

He caught the limb and swung himself gently to one side, and slightly forward. He could touch some one, and as he did so he heard a familiar voice say:

"Thar, blast yer ugly mug; I guess that'll knock the rocks off'n you, and you'll go under."

There was a lunge accompanying this, and a groan quickly followed. Then came a moment's scrambling, a fall and distant splash, so far below as to be but faintly heard.

"Down, down, Kelly, down" cried Tom, holding a cocked revolver in his hand. "Lie down on the log."

In a moment Yellowstone had dropped astride the singular foot-bridge.

"Now cut loose youngster," he cried.

Crack!

Crack!

Crack!

Crack! went shot after shot from Tom's revolver, fired straight ahead over the old hunter. Cries and groans followed the shots.

There was a fearful scrambling, and one or two of the savages plunged down below.

"Here, Hank, give me your pistol; mine is empty," said Tom.

"Down, kid, lay down on the log. I kin give 'em thunder now," roared the old hunter.

"Here, Hank, can't you feel my hand? Let me have your revolver."

"Lay down, ye blasted kids, or ye'll git the socks knocked clean offen ye. Lay down—lay down."

The boys quickly spread themselves down upon the log as flat as they could. It was well that they did, for two rifle-shots rang out from the shore, and the bullets hummed above them through the air.

For a single instant all was silence and darkness; even the faint dash of waters in the cataract below could be heard.

Then there came a flash and stunning report, another and another and another, in such rapid succession that one could not count the shots. It was old Yellowstone, with a pistol in each hand, making the forests ring with the rapidity of his shots.

A cry of pain came from up the hill-side, and a moment later a heavy body came rolling down, and plunged into the water below.

"By gravy!" chuckled the old hunter, quietly, while he rose to his knees. "I guess some of the infernal critters ar' about willin' to play quits. Dang 'em, we'll larn 'em a lesson yit. Come on, boys; we'll go over."

The old hunter scrambled to his feet, and walked to the shore.

"Come on," he whispered.

"We are coming," his young companions answered, and soon were on the shore by his side.

"Well," said Hank Morris, trembling, "that is the most trying adventure I hope I shall ever have."

"Oh, kid, it ain't nothin' when ye git used to it," said the old scout. "When ye hev been tied to the stake, an' the infernal varmints howlin' around ye, ye may then think that ye're in a clus place."

They did not stop long to discuss the matter of their trials and adventures. After ascending to the top of the high bank, they paused only a moment to listen and reload their pistols.

"Come on now arter me," said the old hunter. They traveled all night, and at morning found themselves on a large prairie. They ascended to the top of a knoll and looked about.

"Thar's a wagin-train over thar," cried the hunter, looking across the prairie. It was so far away that they could only just get a glimpse of the long black line slowly creeping over the prairie.

The boys could hardly distinguish the train or the teams. It required the experienced eyes of the old hunter to make out each individual wagon.

"How far is it away?" asked Tom.

"Five or six miles."

"If we could overtake them we would be safe," said Tom.

"Yes; but it'll take a tramp to come up wi' 'em."

"Let's try it."

"We will."

They started across the plain. Away they went as fast as they could go.

"It'll be a trial on you kids," said the old hunter.

"Yes; but we kin stand it."

Away they tramped at a lively trot, carrying their rifles in their hands. The old hunter went at a sort of a lope which was tireless. He was in the advance, and the sun came down exceedingly warm, almost melting the boys.

"It's goin' to be hot, kids."

"Yes."

"D'ye think ye kin stand it?"

"Yes."

"Waal, ef ye find ye're goin' to give out, jest say the word, an' we'll stop."

"Are we gaining on them?" Tom asked.

"Yes."

"Good; go ahead, and we will follow."

The hunter was now near enough to make it out to be an emigrant train. It was not large, but could possibly afford them some protection from the hostile redmen. Those long, tireless limbs seemed never to tire.

He bounded on and on over ant-hills and tufts of grass with a remarkable ease. It was near noon when he all at once came to a dead halt. Our three friends were in low ground, and the wagon-train—only about three miles away—had halted on a ridge.

"Boys," said old Yellowstone, "that ar looks like fight."

"What?"

"See the train?"

"Yes."

"Them wagins are drawin' up in a circle," said the scout.

"So I see."

"Waal, that means fight."

"Who with?"

"Injuns, o' course."

"Where are they?"

"On the other side; ye'll see 'em soon, now, don't ye be alarmed."

He was correct. Over the prairie came the distinct yells of the savages.

"Haden't we better hurry up, and help them?" asked Tom.

"Couldn't git there in time," said the old hunter. "It'll all be over afore we could git there."

A few little puffs of smoke came from the wagons, and the faint reports of a few guns could be heard.

At this a cloud of savages mounted on horseback came thundering around the brow of the hill.

Around the wagon-train in a circuit they swept, drawing nearer and nearer. The discharge of firearms became a roar.

"Boys," said the old scout, "we mustn't be seen."

"Why?" asked Tom, who regretted that he was not near enough to put in a shot.

"Bekase that ar wagin-train's goin' to git chawed up, and ef them red niggers see us, we'll be done the same way. We've got to hide some'ars."

He looked about, and in a narrow ravine thought he espied a hiding place. The tall grass grew on either side so rank that it quite overlapped at the top, and would effectually screen them.

They went to it and crept into the ravine.

The old hunter, who had prophesied the train would be captured, was correct. The fight, as well as all Indian fights are, was of short duration. The train was overwhelmed by the horde of savages.

Tom, who had a small field-glass in his pocket, watched from his concealment.

He saw two females snatched from one of the wagons and borne away on horses by the Indians.

"It's too horrible," he cried. "They have carried off two girls, and are scalping the men."

"The infernal cusses, that's jest the way they do," growled the old hunter.

"I wish I could send a bullet to the heart of one of them."

"No doubt, an' so do I; but, kid, yer too green to venture out o' yer hole. Them darned red niggers would gobble ye up."

The savages soon galloped away, leaving the wagon-train on fire.

Our three friends waited long enough for the Indians to be out of sight, and then went to the spot where the train had burned. Here they buried the dead as well as they could.

The sight was revolting, and they did not remain long.

"Which way are you going?" asked Tom, of old Yellowstone, as they started off on the trail.

"We'll go off in the direction o' them Injuns," answered the hunter.

"Why?"

"It's safest."

That evening they came to a large forest which skirted the banks of a considerable stream—one of those many tributaries of the Yellowstone.

The Indians had left a broad trail behind them, as though they defied pursuit or did not apprehend such a thing as among the possibilities.

Our three friends halted in the woods, and sat down on the body of a fallen tree.

"I tell ye, kids, jest what it is," said old Yellowstone, "them infernal red niggers are not far from here!"

"How can you tell, Kelly?" Tom asked.

"Hain't I got a nose?"

"Do you mean that you smell them?"

"Waal, I guess I jest don't do nothin' else," said Yellowstone Kelly. "I allers smell a red nigger is less'n three mile. It ain't that fur to whar them blasted Injuns hev stopped fur the night."

"Maybe we can rescue those girls," said Tom, with a gleam of pleasure in his eyes at the prospect of a romantic adventure.

"We can!" cried Hank, equally as adventurous as Tom.

The old hunter fixed his eyes on the boys a moment, and said:

"Now, lookee hyar; do you fellers want to git yer ha'r lifted?"

"No."

"Then ye'd better stay away from them Injuns."

"But we may rescue the girls."

"Yaas, and ye mayn't. S'pose ye don't, then yer gone to thunder, sure. They'd lift yer ha'r in no time."

The boys were silent.

"I tell ye what ye'd better do."

"What?" they asked.

"Lay down an' try to git some sleep."

They did lie down; but somehow they were so firmly impressed that it was their duty to make some effort to rescue those prisosers, that they could not sleep. They wanted to make the effort; and, when the old hunter was asleep, both arose by the same impulse.

They had read of youths rescuing fair ladies, and were determined to equal them.

Ah, little did they know the difference between reality and the fictitious part of such an adventure.

They crept off a short distance from the old scout, and then stopped.

"Hank," said Tom, "got your gun, pistols, and knife?"

"Yes."

"Are you willing to try it?"

"I am."

"Then we'll rescue those girls or die!"

They knew the direction to the Indian camp, and in an hour were in sight of it. The fires, for there were half a dozen, were burning brightly.

Near one large campfire were two young girls, one thirteen and the other fourteen years of age.

The fair young captives were too much frightened and horrified to sleep.

The boys saw them from the far-off hill where they were crouched.

"Tom," said Hank, "let's rescue them or die!"

"Agreed!" said Tom.

CHAPTER V.

THE ATTEMPT.

It is much easier to agree to a thing than it is to do it, especially anything as difficult and dangerous as the rescuing of two young girls from the hands of ruthless savages who outnumbered them fifty to one. The Indian in the camp were a hundred is number. They did not know whether this was the same party of Indians which attacked them at the stone cabin or not. There seemed to be a general uprising of savages all over the country, and the plains would, beyond a doubt, soon be running with blood. The frontier would suffer. Hundreds of homes were beyond a doubt a mass of flames by this time, and women and children falling beneath the ruthless tomahawk. No one save those versed in border warfare can appreciate the horrors of an Indian uprising.

Here were two youths fresh from college, youthful and full of adventure, ready to risk their lives for two persons they had never seen before in their lives. It may be called foolhardy, sentimental nonsense, and all that, but it was in reality heroic.

Never did two knights of old start out with greater determination to rescue the young and fair than these two boys.

It was a matter of humanity.

They were lying behind a fallen tree, watching the camp, when Hank said:

"Tom?"

"Well, what, Hank?" Tom asked.

"How are we going to do it?"

"I don't know."

"We had best resort to strategy."

"I don't think we can do anything by charging down upon a hundred savages."

"Oh, I wish——"

"What do you wish?" asked Tom.

"I wish that old Yellowstone Kelly had come with us."

"I guess he ain't far away," said a voice something very much like the famous hunter's, seeming to proceed directly out of the thickest part of the bushy end of the tree-top.

"Hank!" cried Tom.

"What was that?" Hank answered.

"Don't be makin' fools o' yerselves," said the same low, cautious voice, and the next moment some one or something began to wriggle its way through the leaves and branches toward the boys.

Consternation was on the faces of the youths.

"What is it?" Tom asked.

"Who is it?" Hank asked.

"Is it a man?"

"Yes."

"Who is he?"

"Jest wait a bit, kids, an' ye'll find out," answered a strange voice, very much like the voice of old Yellowstone himself.

"Kelly, is it you?" Tom asked in a whisper.

"It ain't no one else, but if ye don't want to hev the socks knocked clean off'n you, ye'd better keep that ar blasted tater-trap o' yours shut."

The head and shoulders first, and then the body of the old veteran hunter appeared.

He sat on the ground by the side of the boys, and looking down at the Indian camp, said in a whisper:

"I said ye two was greener than half-grown pumpkins, an' I guess I war right; gourds 'll do better to compare ye to than pumpkins."

Hank was silent. Tom, after a moment, said:

"We couldn't sleep there and know that those poor girls were in helpless captivity, so near us."

"Didn't ye hear what I said to ye about gittin' yer ha'r riz ef ye undertake anything like carryin' off gal prisoners from the Injuns?"

"Yes, but——"

"But what?"

"But it has been done, and we had made up our minds to make the effort. We can but die, and if we do die it will be in a good cause."

"Now, kid, ye've hit the right card, an' ye're greener'n a gourd not to see it."

"I declare, Kelly, you are a puzzle. I can never understand you."

"That's cos yer green. D'ye think I was goin' ter sleep thar all night an' leave them gals pris'ners to be roasted in the mornin' by the Injuns?"

"Why, you were asleep!"

"No, I wasn't."

"Were you not asleep when we left you?"

"Nary sleep," said the old scout, with a chuckle. "I was only playin' 'possum to git you two kids asleep, when I intended to skip away an' come hyar and do what I could for them gals."

"Well, we are all here now," said Tom.

"Yaas."

"And we must do something."

"Since you chaps are determined to help, I can't keep ye from it; but the chances are 'bout six to one ye'll git yer top-knots lifted afore this thing's over with."

"You were awake when we left?" asked Hank.

"Yer bet; an' I follered right along onter ye, an' hid in the dead branches o' the old tree-top when ye halted hyar."

"Well, if you have determined to rescue the girls, Kelly, we have determined to do the same thing."

"I'm glad on't, now."

"But you did not seem to approve it at first."

"No, not much; but it's different now. I didn't know ye war so rantankerous. But since ye ar', we'll all go in, neck or nuthin'."

"Have you any plan?"

The old hunter studied for a moment, during which time his restless eyes took in every portion of the landscape.

"D'ye think," he at last said, "thet if I war to git you up thar clus to the gals, an' then go on t'other side o' the camp, an' raise a thunderin' noise, an' git 'em arter me that you'uns could git away with the gals. It's an old trick, but it's a good 'un. I never hed it to fail yit."

"We can try it," said Tom.

"There is some risk to it," said Hank.

"Waal, youngsters, lemme tell ye thet ye'll not git any plan what ain't risky. Sometimes the reskiest the better. It takes fellers who are quick wi' a clar head an' ready to knock the socks off anything thet comes in the way."

"We are those kind of fellows," said Tom.

"Yes," said Hank, "we will do all that any living persons can do."

"Thet's the way to talk. You'uns 'll do."

"Yes, we will do," said Tom. "Show us quick what our duties are."

"Don't git too rantankerous."

"Oh, have no fears; our anxiety shall not imperil your plan."

The old fellow chewed his tobacco for a few moments in silence, and then rose to a stooping position.

"Come on," he said. "Be keerful; the rustlin' o' a leaf, the breakin' of a dry stick, may give us dead away, an' we'll find the pesky redskins feelin' fur our ha'r afore we know it."

They all three crawled down into a rocky ravine the bed of which was dry and rocky.

Then they crept on hands and knees its full length. The ravine ended close to the camp, and within a hundred yards of the captive girls.

Here they halted.

"D'ye see that big tree?" whispered the old scout, pointing to a very large forked oak ahead of them.

"Yes," Tom whispered.

"Waal, it ain't more'n forty yards from thet tree to the place whar the leetle gals ar'. Now, when I leave hyar to git round to t'other side, an' make a rumpus, you'uns must make it to thet tree. Thar ye kin lay down an' wait till ye hyar a circus begin over yonder, then go fur them gals just as fast as ye kin. Don't let any grass grow under yer feet. Don't fire a shot unless ye hev to. Depend on yer knives."

They understood the old hunter, and no sooner had he gone than they began, slowly and carefully, to make their way to the tree.

They reached it after a long and painful period of crawling, and lay behind it almost near enough to hear the sleeping savages snore.

Laying down their rifles, with their knives in their hands they awaited the signal for them to make the attack.

They grew impatient, and Tom had been resting on one knee—peeping around the tree—when——

Crack—crack—crack rang out several shots on the opposite side of the camp.

Whoops and yells went up on the air, and in a few moments nearly a hundred savages were in full pursuit of the old hunter, who bounded away with the fleetness of a deer, loading his rifle as he ran.

"Now is our time," cried Tom, and starting to their feet, the boys ran with all speed toward the captives.

CHAPTER VI.

THE THREE MAZEPPAS.

The shots and shouts on the opposite side of the camp of course attracted the attention of all the savages. Who was the attacking party, and how many were they, the savages doubtless asked themselves.

Though two of the Indians remained with the captives ready to defend them from being rescued, their whole attention was directed toward the place where the fight seemed to be raging, and they did not see the youths who were approaching them until they were on them.

Both Tom and Hank were men in size, strong and athletic. They sprang upon the Indians with terrible fury.

Tom struck one a downward blow with his knife.

The savage uttered a groan and fell dead.

Hank was not so successful. His knife struck against a shell ornament, and only inflicted a light wound in the Indian's shoulder.

The Indian uttered a yell, and turned upon him.

They grappled. The savage was a powerful man, and, wounded as he was, an equal match for Hank.

Tom, after having so cleverly disposed of his Indian, turned to the young girls, whose bonds he cut, and lifted them to their feet. They could scarcely stand and for a moment he had to support them.

All this occasioned more or less delay.

"Come on, Hank, and let's carry them," he said.

But Hank did not come. Then he became conscious of a scuffling near him, and turning his head, saw his companion forced to his knees, and the Indian with dagger uplifted, ready to plunge it to his heart.

"Seize his hand, Hank," cried Tom, and the next instant he was at the side of the redskin.

By one quick blow he sent his knife into the savage's breast; with a groan he sank to the ground, dead.

"Come, Hank!" cried Tom, lifting his friend to his feet. "We have no time to lose. The girls have had their ankles bound so tightly and so long that they can scarcely stand; we must carry them. This thing will blow over soon, and we will have the whole tribe at our heels."

Hank fortunately had received no injury.

But the delay occasioned by the struggle had proved fatal. A warrior who had been last to awake from his slumbers uttered a yell and raised his rifle.

Crack! went the shot, and the ball whistled so near Tom's head that he felt the wind of it on his cheek.

"Can you not stand?" said Tom of the oldest girl, whom he had in his arms.

"Oh, no; my feet are so sore and swollen," she answered.

"We will carry you, then."

He seized her in his arms and started down the hill. Hank carried the other.

"They are coming," he cried. "Run, Tom, for your life."

They did run. At the tree they picked up their rifles and began to run again.

Sometimes the girls would be let on the ground, and they would run a short distance, but it would not be far. Their ankles were so bruised and weak from long confinement by the cruel thongs that they invariably gave out.

A dozen Indians at first were in pursuit, and then twenty, and then fifty, as they learned that the captives had been rescued.

The boys ran and fought.

"Tom," said Hank at last, "it's no use to try; we can't make it. We must die."

"That's all we can do."

They had put the girls down at the root of a large cluster of trees, whose giant mossy trunks afforded some shelter.

"Stay there," said the heroic Tom. "We will die before they shall touch you."

"Oh, don't—don't!" cried the girls. "You can save yourselves. Go on and leave us; we will be no worse off than before."

"No, no," said Tom. "Never will I desert a helpless girl!"

"Nor I neither," cried Hank.

Two more determined heroes never stood up side by side to die.

They cocked their rifles.

All around on every side in the forest could be seen the dark forms of Indians, flitting about from place to place, tree to tree.

"Tom," said Hank, "I believe I will venture a shot."

"Be sure that you waste none," Tom answered calmly.

They both had repeating Winchester rifles, and had twelve shots in each.

The Indians knew they were no insignificant marksmen, and kept rather shy.

Crack! went a shot from Hank's gun.

But no death screech answered the ringing report. His ball had missed its mark.

Crack!

Crack! came a pair of answering shots, and the balls whistled near the heads of the boys and struck into the trees. The boy stood, heroes and martyrs to humanity.

They did not notice the flitting forms creeping up in their rear.

Three dark savages were signaling others in advance of them by motions and signs.

The firing ceased.

No Indian would expose himself to their marksmanship, and yet they kept their attention engaged.

Three dark forms were creeping noiselessly up to the trees, and in a few moments the dark-skinned savages sprang one from each side of the trees upon the young men.

They were seized from behind and their rifles grasped.

"Look out, Tom!" cried Hank.

But at that moment each found himself unable to use his gun. The wildest yells rose on the air, and from every side came the Indians at a run.

At this moment shouts and cries of triumph could be heard from the other side of the Indian camp.

Though the boys fought with maddening desperation, they were hurled down to the ground and disarmed.

The screams and yells of the victorious Indians now became perfectly uproarious. The savages hastily bound the young men.

In the confusion and uproar attending the capture of Tom and Hank, the two girls had made a feeble effort to get away, but their bruised and cramped limbs would not permit them to get far.

The Indians traced them to a thicket into which they had crawled, and dragged them forth.

All were carried back to the Indian camp with shouts and yells of triumph.

The astonishment and chagrin of our heroes can better be imagined than described at finding Yellowstone Kelly a prisoner as well as themselves.

"Waal, kids," said the old scout, "we've got our foot in it, an' no mistake, but thar's no use a-whinin'. I guess we'll hev to pay the roast."

"Kelly," said Tom, "how did they get you?"

"I war runnin' an' a long-legged, red buck nigger Indian was pushin' me clus. I wheeled round my head, and kept my legs go'n', intendin' to shoot him as I run, but just then an' infernal bog happened to be in my way, an' I went over

it head kersplunge, an' the bullet o' my gun missed in consequence o' it. Waal, somehow I war a leetle stunned, ye know, an' before I got up a dozen war on me."

His story was told in a very simple way. The Indians bound their prisoners hard and fast. It would have been impossible for them to have got away even if they had not, for a strong guard was kept about them.

All five were kept together, which was one consolation, and no restriction put upon their conversing. It was not a pleasant little party, though the drollery of the old hunter was sometimes humorous.

During the night Tom and his friend Hank learned that the elder girl's name was Aleen Long and the name of the younger was Jos'e Stone. They were accompanying their parents across the plains when the train was attacked.

Their story was very simple, and the story of many others.

The next morning a long pow-wow was held by the savages, which resulted in sending out a small party of them on to the plain.

"What are they up to now?" Tom asked of the scout.

"Dunno. I swow, but they ar' up to some deviltry now, ye kin be sure."

Late in the day the Indians moved away toward the plains. All the time the prisoners were kept in ignorance as to what their fate would be.

They were given some jerked venison, which they ate, at the old hunter's advice.

"Ye'll need all yer strength fur what's comin'." he said.

At dark they came on the edge of the prairie, just where a few straggling trees grew, and where a few blackened snags reared their heads above the plain. There they halted.

It was dark. A bright, full moon shone from a cloudless sky, with ten thousand stars as auxiliaries. The abent Indians came in with three recently captured wild horses, two black and one white.

"The fiends mean to ride us to death," cried the hunter, as he saw them.

"We will be Mazeppas," said Tom.

Although our friends fought and struggled manfully, they were strapped firmly, each on a wild, kicking, struggling steed, which a dozen Indians scarce could hold with their heads toward the head of the animal.

Old Yellowstone Kelly was tied on the white horse, which was the largest, wildest, and most furious. It was white as snow, not a black or red hair on it, and its eyes gleamed like balls of fire.

The two boys were tied each on a black horse the Indians yelling and screaming after them.

At a signal the three animals were released, and away they bounded, kicking, snorting, running, and stamping through the scattering trees and away out into the great moonlit plain, leaving the yelling savages far behind.

"Hyar we go," yelled Yellowstone Kelly to his young companions in misery, "ridin' to etarnity."

CHAPTER VII.

A WOLF-CHASE.

The feelings of the youths strapped upon the backs of those wild horses can better be imagined than described.

The moon shone serenely, lovely, from the heavens, and the stars, in pitying glances twinkled down upon them.

All was so calm that they could almost imagine themselves lying on their backs gazing up at the sky. Had it not been for the thunder of hoofs and the rough jolting motion beneath them, they might have had no apprehension of danger.

The three horses kept close together, perhaps from association.

The ground almost trembled beneath them.

They ran, snorted, leaped, and thundered away over the moonlit plain, trying in a hundred ways to get rid of the unwelcome burden each bore on his back.

Sometimes they ran along side by side. Then they separated, running apart for some distance.

"Boys," shouted Yellowstone Kelly, from the back of the great white horse which kept usually in the middle, "are ye all right?"

"No," shouted Tom.

"Why?"

"I'm fast."

"Waal, keep yer senses about yer."

"I will, unless this beast butts my brains out against a tree."

"Thar ain't much danger o' that; they ar' runnin' away from the trees."

"How are you, Hank?" Tom shouted.

"Tight," was the answer. "The infernal red demons have tied me so tight I can hardly breathe."

"Waal, kid, I guess we're all about in the same fix," said the scout.

"I say Kelly!" cried Tom, as the horses began to run apart again.

"What?"

"What are our chances of escape?"

"About one in ten thousand," was the answer of the scout.

The horses now drifted apart, and our friends could not hear each other's voices. The wild clatter of their own horses' feet drowned all sound of the others.

Away they thundered at a fearful rate of speed. The wild clatter of hoofs, half muffled by the grass, sounded like a sullen roar.

The wild horses continued to snort and send forth vengeful squeals upon the night air, to kick high in their endeavors to shake off their riders. Then they would run in close to each other, and even rub together, in their endeavors to rub off their strange burdens.

"We ar' in fur a tarnation old ride, boys," cried Yellowstone Kelly, as they came together again. "It may be our last, and most likely will, but I'll be clawed by a cattermount ef I a'n't a-goin' to make the most on it."

Hank Morris groaned.

"What' the matter, kid?" roared old Yellowstone. "Does them ropes cut ye a bit?"

"Yes."

"Waal, so do mine."

"My head is getting dizzy."

"Eh; thort so."

"I am sick."

"Shouldn't wonder Ridin' backwards, tied down thet way, would make a red nigger sick."

"Oh, so sick!"

"He'll heave up Jonah soon," said the old scout, without intending to be humorous.

On, on thundered the horses; the moon rose higher and higher in the heavens, until its broad disk was directly above them, and the kind face looked down in pity on the three men riding to their doom.

Hank grew so sick at his stomach that he vomited. He was now a fearful sight to behold. All three were covered with dust, and were bruised and bleeding in many places. Hank had been insensible for some time, and now he regained his consciousness and gazed up at the broad-faced moon and twinkling stars above his head.

Their horses thundered on at a gallop.

The ground still seemed to tremble. Oh, would they never tire? Would they never stop? That long, weary night, would it never wear away? Hour after hour they thundered on.

Then came faintly over the prairie the distant howl of monsters. The cries made their blood run cold.

They knew too well what it meant.

The wolves—great, gaunt, starved monsters—scented their prey.

Like dismal wails of death came faintly borne over the plains the cry. It was a hungry, blood-curdling cry. Their wild, untamed steeds heard it also, and began to snort with additional terror.

If such a thing were possible, they accelerated their speed.

The old hunter, even, was hushed to silence. The scene had now become too terrible for them to converse. The wild horses ceased to neigh and kick, but, warned of the danger about them, put out all their strength in flight. Away they thundered.

It was a wild, rocky region. There was no timber, save for a few stunted gnarled oaks which grew along the edges or down in the ravines.

It was growing colder, and tied as they were, so tightly that their limbs did not have full circulation, they were half frozen.

Yet they made no murmur. Lying on their backs, gazing up at the sky, they thundered on in their wild flight.

Wilder and wilder grew the howls, nearer and nearer they approached, until their swelling roars seemed to fairly burst upon them.

As they sped down a slope, Tom suddenly caught sight of a dark, fiery-eyed monster upon the hill in close pursuit. Then another and another in quick succession appeared on the crest.

"Good heavens!" he groaned, "they are on us. The wolves are on us."

No longer could those three stoical men keep silent.

Hank uttered a wild wail of despair, and even the stout old Yellowstone Kelly groaned.

No wonder!

A hundred hungry wolves, at least, were in close pursuit.

Then a hush fell on the other three men. Neither spoke nor groaned. All was the silence of the grave, save the terrified snorts and thunders of the horses' feet, and the dismal howls of wolves.

Only those who have been chased by wolves know what horror it is. They can realize how terrible the death must be when they see the sharp fangs ready to rend them to pieces.

Their great blazing eyes looked like coals of fire as they came after the three horses, gaining on them steadily, for the horses had had a long chase before they met the wolves; now they were liable to be exhausted or run down.

Oh, if daylight would only come!

Yellowstone Kelly knew that the wolf dreads the light of the sun, and as soon as it grew light the cowardly pack would slink away.

But it was two or three hours yet before dawn would appear, and those two or three hours would be equal to so many ages.

The horses realized their danger, and were trembling, snorting, and plunging with terror. The howls of the wolves increased every moment.

Nearer and nearer they drew, until they were all about them, leaping and plunging, snapping at the horses' flanks.

"Boys," cried old Yellowstone Kelly, "we've got to pass in our checks, I reckin. It's dog-goned mean to be eat up by wolves thet way. Ef it was only fightin' the redskins, an' knockin' thunderation out on 'em that we went under, an' got our ha'r riz, I wouldn't mind it one bit; but this way it's dog-goned mean."

Wilder and wilder grew the howls of the angry wolves. The very earth seemed to resound with their cries.

It was a fierce, hunger cry—an angry howl which portended death and horror.

Tom saw the great white steed on which the old hunter was strapped galloping along at his side.

A great huge gray wolf bounded upward, and tried to fasten his fangs on the animal's beautiful side.

With such a scream as only a horse can give in pain, it leaped aside and kicked the monster wolf with its hoofs. The wolf went howling to the earth with a broken shoulder.

Wolves are like some men, or rather some men are like wolves. The moment one is down all others spring upon him.

In a moment the wounded wolf was torn limb from limb.

The wild horses, with their unwilling burdens, gained on them. The white horse seemed to have gained a sudden impetus by the attack on him, and dashed off to the right, disappearing around the hill with his burden.

The boys never saw the beautiful animal again.

Away and away thundered their own horses.

Now that the wolves had devoured their injured companion, they came up again at tremendous leaps and bounds.

"Hank!" cried Tom.

"Our time has come," answered Hank.

"Yes, but can't we—"

"No, we can't do anything. We are tied too tight. We are just bound to lay here and be devoured."

"There is one thing we can do."

"Yes, lay here and be eat up."

"No."

"What else?"

"Pray?"

"I had not thought of that," cried Hank. "Well, I don't know but what it's too late even for that."

"Ah, it's never too late."

"I think it would look mean in me."

"Why?"

"If I had my life to live over again I would be a Christian but here at the last moment, to give the fag end of my life to devotion, looks real cowardly."

"Most infidels and rascals do," said Tom.

"Yes, but it's cowardly. Better begin sooner, when all is right. I think it's the square thing."

The wolves were on them, leaping and snapping, and snarling, and put a stop to their conversation.

CHAPTER VIII.

TOM AND HANK.

The wolves were growing so fierce that they leaped up at the sides of the horses—sprang at their noses.

Many, struck down beneath their hoofs, were crippled, and either went howling away, or were torn up by their more cowardly companions. It was a moment of intense peril to Tom and Hank.

One wolf, more bold than others, sprang at the hair-rope which bound Tom to the horse. It caught the rope in its fearful teeth, and either hanging on out of sheer desperation, or because its teeth were caught and could not be released from it, it hung for some time.

The horse staggered under the load as it ran. It dropped to its knees. Tom uttered such a shout of horror that the wolf sprang away, and the next moment his horse staggered to its feet and bounded like the wind after the horse to which Hank was strapped.

It was a glorious sight to them. The dawn portended rescue and life.

If those wild horses could but endure the flight another half hour they would be safe. Already the wolves seemed growing more shy.

"Hank!" shouted Tom.

"What?" was the answer.

"Daylight is coming."

The shout was a joyful one.

"Yes, but I fear it will be too late for us."

"No—no, it may not."

"What good can it do, when it does come?" asked the discomfited Hank. "We are doomed to be devoured."

"The wolves are afraid of light. As soon as day dawns they will take to the woods and hills and hide themselves. We will be safe from them if we can but hold out till day dawns."

"But there are other dangers."

"It will be time enough to consider them as they come. This one is sufficient for the present."

"I have always heard wolves were afraid of shouting."

"Then let us yell at them."

The boys turned over as near on their sides as they could, and shouted and screamed at the cowardly pack, which began to flinch from the sound of human voices.

With dismal, cowardly howls they shrank back.

It was rapidly growing lighter.

"It works—it works like a charm, Hank!" cried Tom.

"Yes, it does."

"We may be saved yet."

"There's a little hope."

The horses were running much slower, for they were almost completely exhausted.

Their proud spirit was humbled, and they ran slowly and feebly along, at times stumbling over the tufts of grass. They were breathing hard.

Occasionally the wolves would seem to rally and make a dash for them, but wild shouts from the boys always sent them back, cowed. At each time they retreated further and further away.

Day dawned at last. When it came the wolves slunk over the hills, and the last one had disappeared when the sun was up.

A little after sunrise the two horses stood on the banks of a stream as quiet and docile as old farmhorses. The boys were still strapped on their backs.

"Hank," said Tom, "if you were only a little nearer."

"What difference would that make?" Hank asked.

"I could untie your hands."

"Yes, but I can't get nearer."

"Reach out and grab me as far as you can."

Hank stretched out toward Tom, and Tom stretched out toward Hank; but with all their stretching and all their reaching they could not touch each other.

"Hank?"

"Tom, it's no use; I guess we will just have to lay right here in sight of each other and starve to death."

"Oh, no! Never give up—never say die!" Tom answered, hopefully. "Your left leg is on the opposite side from me?"

"Yes."

"Well, give him a kick in the flank."

"Oh, no, that won't do!"

"Yes, it will."

"It will make him jump off into the river."

"No, it won't."

"But I know it will."

"Then better go into the river and drown than be here. If we were a foot nearer each other I could untie your hands with my left. That knot is close to me."

Hank looked at his companion in an imploring manner. It was hard to die so near what might be considered freedom.

Then there was that narrow space between them.

"Try it, Hank; it can but be death," said Tom.

"I will."

He gave his horse a gentle kick. The horse did not move. He was very gentle.

"Kick harder," said Tom.

He did kick harder, but still the horse did not move.

Again and again, harder and harder, until the animal began to shrink from the kicks.

The space was filled up at last.

"That will do," Tom whispered.

In a moment his hand was busy.

Fortunately his fingers were not tied so tightly but what he could use them. He caught the knot between his forefinger and thumb, and gave it a turn.

"Gently, Tom," said Hank, breathless with hope and suspense. The ponies flinched, and should they take a step apart there would be the yawning chasm again between them and life.

They were silent as the grave, while Tom worked at the knot. He could only use one hand, with not the power to move it more than an inch either way. He turned his hand about at the knot. The horses stood still.

In a moment, to his joy, he found the knot slipping.

"You will soon be safe, Hank," he said.

"Yes, and then I can save you."

He forced the end of the lariat through the loop, drew it out, and in a moment more the hands of Frank Morris were free.

"Now, Hank, liberate your feet," cried Tom.

Hank tried to raise up, but to his surprise, could not.

"Hurry," said Tom. "The horses are growing a little restless. When this one has fully recovered you cannot approach him to release me."

"I am powerless to move," said Hank.

"Any bones broken?"

"No; it is because I am numbed."

"I hope you will soon be over your numbness."

He made another effort, and finally succeeded in raising himself to a sitting position, his back to the horses' head. He had partially regained the use of his arms, and soon released his legs. Then he rolled almost perfectly helpless from the horse.

He fell upon the ground.

"Get up," said Tom.

"I can't. My legs are helpless. I can't move them."

"They can't be broken."

"No—only numbed."

"Crawl to me quick, Hank," said Tom. "If you don't, I fear it will soon be too late."

Hank began to crawl toward his friend, and in a moment was at his side.

"Raise up on your knees."

After considerable effort he began to get up.

He reached up and caught hold of the knotted cord about Tom's wrist, and at last after many efforts, got it untied.

"Now, Tom, is your hand loose?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Can you release the rest of your body?"

"I can."

"Do so, for I am given out."

Tom, after considerable difficulty, released his legs, and fell to the ground as helpless as his friend. Both were completely numbed, and rolled upon the grass, and lay sprawling about in dangerous proximity to the heels of the wild horses.

"Are your legs broken?" asked Hank, who was getting some use of his.

"No—no; I think they are numbed. I will be all right soon."

It took several minutes for them to stand. Hank was able to stand first. He got up, but staggered a moment afterward, and fell sprawling on the grass. He got up a second time, and this time was enabled to stand better.

They walked along with tolerable ease, side by side.

Having gone a hundred paces or more, they were compelled to halt and rest. They glanced back at their wild steeds. They still stood with drooping heads, but, beyond a doubt, were fast recuperating their strength, to be soon dashing over the plains with the speed of the wind.

Tom and Hank turned and went on. They could only walk about a quarter of a mile, when they were forced to halt and gaze about them.

"Hank," said Tom, "how are we to escape? It must be two hundred miles to civilization. We have not a mouthful of provisions, and we can never walk that distance without food."

"We have no guns with which to kill game."

"No."

"We are doomed to die of starvation."

"No; it's not the right way to think."

After a few moments of thoughtful silence, Tom said:

"Hank, we have acted like fools—desperate, terrible fools."

"In what?"

"In not keeping those horses. They were tamed—broken; and we could have tied ropes about their heads, and rode them back to the settlement."

"Maybe we can go back and get them yet."

"We will try."

They turned about and started toward the horses. They were still in sight of them, and the animals had not yet moved.

Nearer and nearer they approached them, and now they saw that one had so far recuperated as to graze on the soft green grass about the banks of the stream.

"I'm afraid, Tom, we can't catch them," said Hank.

"Our very lives depend on it," said Tom.

CHAPTER IX.

YELLOWSTONE KELLY'S DILEMMA.

"Gosh tribe their pesky souls," said Yellowstone Kelly, as the horse on which he was riding went thundering away with the wolves close at his heels.

They snapped and snarled, and fought and scrambled to get at the fine blooded animal, and the man who was strapped helplessly on his back.

"The darned critters are jist hungerin' and thirstin' fur a feller's blood."

The wolves came howling on, like the terrible monsters they were, their eyes gleaming in the darkness as if each was a living coal of fire.

"Consarn them!" said the hunter. "They ar' determined to eat me! Waal, I only hope I'll lay heavy on their stomachs of they do."

The snow-white steed thundered away into the night.

He evidently possessed better bottom than either of the others. He ran with the speed of the wind, and, when a wolf came within range of his heels, he kicked back with such force as to send the animal sprawling to the ground, or render it a cripple for life.

"I'll be cattermount howled an-chawed up fur buffler meat ef I don't believe this 'ere animal is jist gwine ter outrun every one of them pesky critters, the wolves."

Away he went thundering, snorting and neighing, just ahead of the pack.

Old Yellowstone looked back, and saw that the wolves were not gaining on him, and he could not resist the temptation to give utterance to a shout of triumph.

"Git, ye blasted varmints!" he roared. "D'ye think, by the gemany pins, ye kin keep up with old Whitney? Git, long legs; them beasts are arter ye! Come, ye white-livered cowards! We'll had ye a chase what ye never heard on afore! Oh, ef I only had my rifle wi' me, I'd make ye think it war fun!"

The wolves continued to howl, and the horse continued to snort and rear, and plunge and tear along over the plain.

Down-hill, up-hill, sometimes leaping a yawning chasm, which it would seem no horse could leap over, again climbing to the top of some rocky precipice.

The wolves continued to follow him.

Old Yellowstone, however, felt sure he would be safe when daylight came. He had the utmost confidence in his horse holding out. It was some time yet, and the animal did not show any signs of failing.

"He's got bottom, and no mistake about that," said the hunter.

The horse was at least holding his own against the wolves. The wild chase went on.

Old Yellowstone tried one of his wrists, and to his surprise found it loose. The knot had in some miraculous manner slipped in the wild chase. He pulled his arm back.

"By the great buffler bull o' the plains!" he exclaimed, "I b'lieve I kin get my hand loose." A few moments more convinced him.

His hand was free.

To free the other was but the work of a few moments. Then he raised himself to a sitting position, his face toward the animal's tail. The horse was running at full speed. The hunter gave a yell of defiance at the wolves.

"By gravy, I'll gin it to 'em while I kin," he said. "It may be I'll never be able to gin 'em another."

Having released his legs, he made a dexterous bound and turned about face toward the animal's head, and swinging the long rope with which he had been bound above—

"I guess, by the tarnation that they'll not git away wi' old Yellerstun half as easy as they thought they would. Gosh tribe the pesky red fiends, an' white-livered cowards, why don't they fight like white men?"

On thundered the white horse down a dark ravine. It was a section of the country where the hills rose on either side almost to mountains. There was an occasional stunted cedar.

The wolves were following.

The cedars grew thicker. At last he was running through a pine forest. The wolves did not for a moment abate their speed. They kept almost within snapping distance, and yet the heels of the wild horse kept them away from him. They had learned by experience that those heels were dangerous.

The scene was growing dark—wolves were becoming bolder. The moonbeams were obscured by the bows and branches of the trees. The white horse looked like some great snow-bank dashing through the dark forest.

Yellowstone Kelly lay down upon the withers of his horse to keep the branches of trees from brushing him off.

Away—away—and away he went. Now he seemed in imminent peril of being dashed against a tree, the next the bushes and branches of trees were slapping him violently in the face. One moment he feared the horse was running too fast, and would never sufficiently tire for him to dismount. At the next he feared that he would give out too soon.

He would almost come to the conclusion that the wolves were steadily gaining on him, and in the next five minutes would be equally as certain that they were losing.

It was a fearful ride. He felt that he was in a fearful predicament. He could scarcely guess at the hour of the night. A moment was almost an age. It seemed to him the longest night he had ever seen.

At last the horse burst through a thicket, and went over a precipice—down—down—down!

We all know how terrible the sensation of falling is.

Splash!

Horse and rider struck into the water. The water rolled in one vast wave up above them.

Down—down—down they sank!

He sprang up, and cast himself from the horse.

He was swimming one way on the water, and the horse went another.

His moments of terrible suspense were over. He was free from his horse, but his danger was not over.

On either side of him, rising along the river bank, was a row of trees, alders, or willows. The water was an expanse of the river had passed the wolves on the plain, and he had got off all report. He dared not land. What was he to do? Something struck him on the forehead.

He turned and caught it. It was a log, and proved to be the end of a log, which was floating down the stream.

It was not only a log, but a great tree, with branches spreading broad and low, and it was evidently had but just recently been washed out from the

banks of the river, and fallen in, for its thick foliage was still green.

It had been drifting root first, and it was the butt which struck Yellowstone on the shoulder.

He had clutched one of the wide, extended roots, and climbed upon it.

"I guess I'll take a voyage," he said, laconically, to himself. "Them darned pesky red varmints would like to make a shootin' target o' me."

At this moment he heard a scrambling up the river bank. He looked, and saw the white horses trying to get a footing on dry ground.

He had crawled out of the water, and was just climbing up the bank of the stream, when half a dozen dark, ferocious wolves sprang upon him.

The horse screamed in pain and terror, and fought with his great sharp gleaming teeth and forefeet. He reared and plunged, but a wolf was at each flank, two on his back, and another had seized him by the throat.

"That's a cussed shame," cried the old hunter. "I only wish I had my rifle—I'd jest knock thunder out o' them wolves. I'd save that horse yet."

For a few moments the scrambling and fighting on the side of the steep bank was furious. Great blocks of stone were torn loose, and rolled down splash into the water.

At last the horse reared in the air, fell backwards, and rolled down into the river with no less than five wolves fast to him. All went beneath the waves, never to rise again.

The hunter, with a sigh, climbed upon the trunk of the floating tree. An ominous growl from the thick branches of the floating tree startled him. Then out from its foliage he saw two gleaming eyes and sharp, fierce teeth, while a terrific cat-like growl came to his ears.

"By goshuns! it's a painter, on this very tree," cried the hunter.

He was correct—a monster panther was crouched in the branches of the floating tree.

Each side of the shore was lined with deadly wolves. It was death to land. It was certain destruction to remain on the floating tree. The old hunter was in a dilemma.

CHAPTER X.

THE OLD TRAIL.

The hopes and fears of Tom and Hank, as they approached the wild horses, can better be imagined than described. They were both somewhat sore from their uncomfortable ride, and owing to the tightness with which they had been bound. But they were enabled to walk tolerably well. They realize that they had acted very foolishly in giving up their horses at the moment they had them conquered.

"If we lose them," said Hank, "we will not have another chance of getting horses for our journey."

"That is true," Tom answered. "At least, not unless some miracle should be performed."

"Miracles are of poor dependence in this wild country," said Hank.

"I haven't much confidence in miracles, and yet some very strange things have happened since we have been on the plains."

"Tom?"

"Well?"

"Don't you suppose some of our misfortune is in consequence of our wickedness?"

"Oh, no."

"Why?"

"If men were punished here to the full measure of their wickedness there would be but few left alive on this earth."

"That may be true."

"We had better be thinking of some mode of capturing those wild horses, instead of discussing matters of moral philosophy."

"All right. There they are, and they look a little docile yet."

"I have heard it said that they always have an attachment for the man who has successfully ridden them. Now we will see whether there is any truth in this or not. I see the one which carried me is beginning to graze; yours still stands

with his head drooped. I will try to get mine, and you try to get yours."

"Agreed," said Hank Morirs.

The question which puzzled the boys most was whether it would be better to attempt to slip up on the horses or walk boldly forward to them.

Hank thought they had better creep along down in the grass until they were near enough to spring on them, but Tom was sure that the best plan was the boldest. Just walk right up, as a matter of course, and lay their hands on the wild animals. Tom was right. The boldest plan is invariably the best. To catch a horse, one must not be afraid of him, or let him think there is anything to fear between them. He had better advance boldly to the horse and seize him with a firm hand.

The two boys finally decided to adopt Tom's plan, and began to boldly advance upon the horses. The one was still too tired to stir, and the other nibbled the grass very feebly. Their long race from the wolves had been more than their iron nerves could endure. When the boys thought of that ride across the plain with the dark, fiery-eyed monsters leaping, howling and snapping at them as they fairly flew over the plain, their blood almost ran cold.

"Careful now," cautioned Tom, as one of the horses which had been nibbling the grass raised his head and looked at them. "A single false move, and we will lose them. Keep your hands down. By no means raise them, for it would be a signal for the animals to start away at a gallop over the plain. Once get them to running, and we are lost."

The horse was still very weak, and seemed to have lost nearly all its fiery ambition. He only gazed at them a moment, and then, with drooping head, began to nibble the grass.

"Safe!" said Tom.

He walked boldly up to the animal, and when within two feet of him suddenly threw out his arm and caught it around the neck. The horse pulled back some, and struggled to get away, but gave up in a moment when he found his master determined.

Hank had found the other animal so completely exhausted that it would not move. He caught it by the mane, and it stood perfectly still.

"Well, Tom, now that we have got them, what shall we do?" asked Hank.

"Do? Why, there lie the ropes with which we were tied. Make halters out of them, then we will have them fast until they recover sufficiently to carry us."

"It's an excellent idea," said Hank. "But who will make the halters?"

"You; your horse is perfectly docile, while mine has a half-formed and increasing desire to get away. Make me a halter quick. Then I cannot only hold my horse, but yours as well, while you make one for him."

Hank was very quick, and quite an expert in the manufacture of halters. He soon had one constructed that was strong and well adapted for the purpose for which it was intended. In a moment the halter was on the horse, and he, finding he was not to be hurt, began to pick grass again.

"Now, Hank, be as quick about your own," said Tom.

Hank obeyed the injunction, and in a few moments both horses were under their control.

"Well, what next?"

"Let them rest."

The boys sat down upon the grass, and after a few moments the second horse began to snuff the grass; then it ripped feebly at first, but soon began to eat with vigor. It had almost wholly recovered its strength, and was fully as active as the other.

"I think we might go now, Hank," said Tom.

"Well?"

"Let's lead them down to that stream of water, and let them have a drink."

The boys led the horses down to the water's edge. They were very docile now, and could be taken anywhere. They, as well as the boys, were very thirsty.

"Let's lie down here and drink, too," said Tom.

The grass grew tall right along at the edge of the water. The boys tied the halters to some stunted bushes near, and then lay down to drink.

The water had that strong vegetable taste which water on the prairie does, but it was delicious to the thirsty youths. Suddenly Tom heard a fearful warning sound near them.

"My heavens!" he cried, starting back.

As he did so a huge rattlesnake started up from its coil, raising its head and basilisk eyes, scintillating like diamonds.

Tom sprang back with a cry of horror as the deadly reptile struck at him with its poisonous fangs. It missed him by barely an inch. Pale with horror, Tom could hardly move. His narrow escape from the reptile was as trying on his nerves as his long race from the wolves.

The rattlesnake, as if determined to yet strike its deadly fangs in him, had again re-coiled itself, when Hank, seizing a stone, hurled it at the serpent. It struck it on the head and crushed it to the ground. There it lay, its tail wriggling, its warning rattle singing in a sickening way. It was terrible to witness the dying struggles of the reptile.

"Its tail will not die until sundown," said Tom, as he noticed the gyrations of the serpent.

"That was a close shave for you, Tom," said Hank.

"It was."

"A touch of its poisonous fangs, and your life would not be worth a moment's purchase."

"No," said Tom, shaking his head. "The very thought of it makes my head dizzy, and I feel sick."

"Let's go."

"Agreed!"

"I fear the serpents worse than I do the Indians."

"So do I."

They led their horses some distance, and as they seemed much refreshed, decided to mount them. It was better to ride them now than to allow them to wholly recover from their fit of exhaustion. They stirred about some when the boys were on them, switching their tails this way and that, but after some little trouble they got them to go on. The boys were both excellent riders.

As the horses became more nearly restored to themselves the boys urged them to a gallop over the plain.

"Hank!" said Tom, whose spirits were considerably restored, "this is much better than footing it!"

"Ever so much."

"If we only had old Yellowstone with us now, three good rifles and ammunition, we would almost be happy."

"We would—we would."

"We could defy the redskins."

"You are right we could. These three horses have got bottom and speed."

"It has been well tried. They outran that pack of wolves."

"Yes."

"I tell you our lives were not worth much then."

"Poor old Yellowstone Kelly, what do you suppose has become of him?"

"He has doubtless been devoured by the wolves long ago. His bones are now bleaching on the plains."

The two boys shuddered at the thought. They galloped on for some time in silence. Both began to feel the pangs of hunger. This was an alarming discovery, for there was no possible way to supply themselves with food.

They said nothing, but occasionally their heavy, bloodshot eyes were turned on each other, and they sighed. What horrible thoughts came in each other's minds! Starving on the plains! Dragging their weak, emaciated bodies along wearily over the ground, perhaps devouring their horses, then one fasting on the other! Their stomachs seemed to revolt at the idea, but yet they knew not what horrors might be in store for them.

It was late in the afternoon when, as they were riding gloomily along, they suddenly came upon a plain-beaten trail. Neither had spoken for two hours. Now they exchanged glances. There was no doubt of it being the trail where a wagon-train had passed. There were the marks of wheels. It was an old trail, but, nevertheless, a trail.

"Tom," said Hank, "help may be near at hand."

"I hope so," was the answer.

CHAPTER XI.

KELLY AND THE BOYS MEET.

Yellowstone Kelly was a man of no small resources. His world-wide reputation as a backwoodsman would not have been sustained so long as it has had had he not possessed an active brain, cool head, and clear judgment. He had been in many a perilous position before, and had always depended on his own coolness and sagacity. Yellowstone glanced at

the rows of fiery-eyed wolves on either side of the stream, and knew it would be dangerous to land. He had glanced at the panther in the tree-top, and knew it was equally dangerous to remain there. His condition was a perilous one. Those nerves, steeled to endure almost any kind of danger, were now tried to their utmost. If he had had a knife or any kind of weapon he might have had some chance; but those deadly fangs and long, sharp claws would have to be met without a single weapon. As it grew lighter the wolves began to show uneasiness and exhibit signs of retiring, while the panther grew more bold. The animal seemed to forget that it was on a floating tree-top, and when it was fully daylight it started forward toward the hunter.

It was at this moment that old Yellowstone Kelly glanced at the shores and saw the wolves beating a hurried retreat.

"Now chaw me up for buffler meat," he said, "ef I don't think old Yellerstun's in pooty clus quarters. Ye daren't start fur home, old boy, or try to git ashore, fur ef ye do ye'll be lit onto by the painter. Ye daren't stay here fur the same reason. Guess ye're in a pickle, an' no mistake about it."

It was now fully daylight.

The panther came out boldly upon the tree, and began slowly and carefully advancing on the log. Yellowstone Kelly was (as the reader will remember) half submerged in the water at the root of the tree. The deadly beast saw his head bobbling up and down, and the eyes of the monster kept up a continuous blaze of fury. He watched it as it advanced. The floating log swayed with his weight, and the panther growled angrily.

Now it crouches for a spring. Old Yellowstone Kelly knew that the supreme moment had come. In twenty seconds more he would be safe or dead. He had resolved upon a stratagem to at least frustrate the beast.

With a fierce scream it bounded toward him, and he dipped his head under the water, diving under the roots of the tree and coming up near the spot from whence the animal had sprung.

Splash went the panther into the water.

There is no doubt but it was a little confused and annoyed at its failure.

Quick as thought Yellowstone Kelly sprang out of the water on the log, and there luckily found a heavy club. The panther was swimming in front of the tree.

Kneeling down and holding to a root of the floating tree, the hunter struck the fierce beast a blow over the head with all his might. It was stunned, and sank beneath the water.

He knew he had not killed it, and the next moment a paw and long sharp claws came out of the water in a few inches of his face, making a blind stroke at him.

He seized the paw and drew it around a projecting root of the floating tree so as to keep the head under water. Here he held it for some time, while the beast struggled frantically in its death throes.

It was drowning, and all the hunter had to do was to hold on to the foot and keep out of the way of those claws. Those revengeful claws did occasionally scratch his arm, but he held on like grim death.

The struggles of the panther grew weaker and weaker as the moments passed on. He knew that it would soon be dead. He watched the movements of the paw, the only part visible above the water save the occasional flashing of the long yellow tail. Those wonderful expansions and contractions of the deadly claws told him how the struggle was going, and that it would soon be over.

The tree swept on down the rapid current. There was one last terrible spasmodic effort to get breath and the paw fell limp and lifeless. Yellowstone Kelly released it, and the dead panther floated alongside of the tree. By the aid of his club he pushed it back under the branches, and then prepared to swim ashore.

On reaching the shore not a wolf was in sight. It had been broad daylight for some time, and Yellowstone Kelly knew they would be gone. He sat down upon the river bank to rest, and watched the tree as it floated down the stream around a bend.

It was with a sigh almost of despondency that Yellowstone Kelly rose to his feet and started away.

"Waal, old Yellerstun, ye've saved yer rabe this time, and no mistake—but them boys' whar's them boys?"

He shook his head and sighed gloomily, and was silent for several moments. At last he spoke. "Waal, whar's done can't be helped, I reckon. I wonder whar them boys hadn't a conce. But wishtin' don't amount to nothin'. I guess, old

Yellerstun, ye've got 'nough to do fur the present to take keer o' yerself."

He plodded along through the woods and forests which skirted the stream, and came out upon a plain or plateau.

He paused and looked about over the great sea of grass.

There was not a living animated object in sight.

He saw only some great birds sitting upon the tops of a few dead and barren trees on the edge of the woods. Their wild screams seemed to be shouts of defiance to the disarmed hunter.

He looked at them a moment, and muttered:

"Strange, queer birds. Wonder what they mean? Oh, if I had a gun! I'd make it warm for them devilish birds."

He hurried on through the tall grass. In places it came quite up to his waist, and in the lowlands was almost high as his head.

The hunter kept well upon the ridge; he wanted to see objects as far out on the plain as he could.

"It's 'bout sartin, old Yallerstun," he muttered, "that yer in fur a tough time o' it. Dod darn them Injuns, they tuk a feller by surprise, an' I didn't dream they war on the war-path, or I'd never 'lowed them two kids to come out here at all."

Noon came. The sun beat down mercilessly on the head of the old hunter.

His bronzed features indicated that he had long been accustomed to heat and sun, as well as all sorts of weather.

"Why, blast me!" he ejaculated; "thar's been a wagin-trail along here now, jest as sure as fate."

He struck the trail and set off at a lively trot. No man save an experienced, hardy plainsman could have endured what he did. He ran at a sort of a gallop over the road, and soon came to the top of a slight eminence.

He halted and gazed down the road before him.

The old hunter could hardly believe his eyes.

He could not repress the shout of surprise and joy that rose to his lips.

Before him, not more than a mile or two away, were two horsemen riding leisurely along.

The atmosphere was so clear that he could plainly see they were white men.

"Halloo-oo-oo!" he shouted, waving his cap.

Whether they heard him, or only accidentally turned around and saw him, he did not know; but certainly they halted their horses and faced about toward him.

He ran down the hill toward them as rapidly as he could. When near enough to recognize their features he halted.

His eyes dilated with astonishment.

Yellowstone Kelly thought he must have seen a ghost.

"Chaw me up fur huller meet, ef it ain't them boys—them very boys!" he cried.

He hurried down toward them.

When near enough to hear them, Tom said:

"Hank, it is Yellowstone Kelly."

"It is sure."

"You kin jest bet it is, an' no mistake," cried Kelly himself.

"Yes; hurrah, old Yellowstone! We thought you had been cut up long ago."

"Chawed by the darned, sneakin' coyotes, did ye? Waal, not much, I reckon, if I know myself. Ye bet they don't come it over this wild chicken. I'm goin' to be kickin' about here fur many years yit; but whar in the thunderation did ye git them hosses yer ridin'?"

"Oh, these are the ones the Indians gave us," said Tom, with a laugh.

"Waal, may I be chawed up by the coyotes ef thet ain't so. I didn't think it; and ye got out all right."

They decided to halt for a little rest.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CAPTIVES AGAIN.

"Waal, boys, ye may kick me fur a cattermount ef this ain't the most agreeable surprise what I've ever come across on these prairies," said old Yellowstone Kelly.

They proceeded to relate their adventures, with which the reader is already acquainted. When they had got through old Yellowstone Kelly continued:

"It's all a'most tarnation strange, I tell ye, boys. I thought

once when I was on that big white hoss, and the wolves a-howling and yelpin' and snappin' around me, that it'd be the last o' old Yellerstun Kelly."

"It was a little trying on the nerves of us all," answered Tom.

"You kin bet it war, and lemme tell ye, lads, thet I don't know but what it war wuss on the floatin' tree, with a yellin', screechin' painter in the top, than on the prairie with all them wolves howlin' about us."

"I suppose it was. But let us now talk of the future."

"Oh, the future'll take keer of itself."

"But it's well enough to provide ahead."

"I reckon it is."

"We've only got two horses."

"Yes, and there's three on us," said Yellowstone.

"We've no rifles, pistols, or weapons of any kind."

"And got lots o' red varmints all around us ready to be feelin' fur our ha'r."

"Yes, and no provisions."

"No, and nothin' to git a ounce o' meat, even ef the prairies were covered with bufflers."

"That is about the position we are in," said Tom, thoughtfully. "Now, the question is, what are we to do?"

For a few moments the old hunter was silent. At last he said:

"Waal, youngsters, I reckon we are in a condemned little difficulty just now. That's no tellin' jest at this moment what's best to do, but I kinder rather suspect the best thing we kin do is to foller along on this trail, and trust to luck."

"It's an old trail."

"Yes, but it may lead to some place."

"I guess you are right. I wish we had another horse," said Tom.

"I'd rather hev my old rifle about this time," said the old hunter, with a quiet chuckle. "But we kin put in an hour or two to some advantage afore night. Let's do it."

The youths agreed to what he said, and Tom insisted on his riding his horse while he walked; but the old hunter declared that he was used to walking, and he would walk.

He trudged along at a lively speed, and the horses kept along at his side.

"You fellers are higher up in the world 'n I am, so ye'd better keep a sharp lookout on either side ahead, and behind, to see thet no pesky, sneak'n', cowardly redskins git in on us 'thout us seeing 'em."

"We'll keep up a watch," said Tom. "Have no fears of a surprise."

"Blarst ef ye're ever free from surprises on these 'ere plains," said the hunter. "Look over thar; thar's a surprise now."

He pointed across a low ridge which gradually sloped into a lower plain.

Upon the other side of a ravine, and ascending the hill, was a riderless horse. He had a saddle and bridle on him, but there was not a human being in sight.

They halted, astounded. Was an enemy near? May not the Indians have turned the horse loose as a decoy to draw whoever might be passing within the range of their rifles.

For a few moments the three white men were undecided how to proceed. Was it better to go on, or retreat. Tom, who always took a desperate view of everything, said:

"Let's go on—let's capture that horse. Retreat would be certain death. If we capture the horse we have a chance for our lives."

They advanced carefully across the ridge. Should the Indians be in ambush they would be at their mercy, for they had not a weapon of any kind. They advanced carefully, however, and their two horses discovering a third on the hill-side, began to show some anxiety to join it.

The horse, which was grazing, raised its head with fright, and started away at a trot.

It only went a dozen paces until it paused and looked back with that animal curiosity which we sometimes see prompting people.

There were horses—companions. The sight of them overcame the equine's timidity, and it came trotting down the hill. It whinnied with delight, and was answered by the captive horses. As the horse came nearer, our friends could see that there was blood upon the saddle.

It was blood well dried, and evidently had been on it for two or three days. The horse now evinced no fear, but came quite up to our friends, and suffered Yellowstone Kelly to seize the bridle and hold it.

"I tell ye, boys, what it is," said Old Yellowstone, examining the blood on the saddle. "There's been a fight, not far away from here, neither. I think I kin read it right through. That wagon train we've been follerin' was attacked, an' ef we'll keep on we'll come to the place."

They went on. The sun was almost down when they came to a bit of low ground through which a creek ran. The banks were covered with tall grass and willow-trees.

There, in the low ground, a most shocking sight met their view. Five wagons were drawn up in a circle. Around the circle were dead oxen, horses, and men, women, and children. They were scalped, and the wolves had stripped nearly all the flesh from their bones. The sight was so shocking that the boys turned away sickened and disgusted.

But not so with old Yellowstone. He was accustomed to such sights, and merely muttered:

"The red fiends hev been up to some more o' their work."

He dismounted from the lately captured horse, and commenced prowling about the late camp for something to eat.

But it had been effectually plundered. There was not only not a thing to eat, but every weapon, offensive and defensive, had been carried away by the victorious savages.

"Thar ain't a thing to eat," said the old hunter, "unless it be some o' the carcasses o' them butchered cattle, an' the wolves got 'bout all o' them."

"Ugh!" said Tom, in disgust.

"Waal, now, thar's not a gun or a thing about here. Ef we even had a knife we mought do somethin', but we ain't. I've fared a deal wuss than eatin' fly-blowned beef."

Tom and Hank declared they would starve before they would do anything of the kind.

The hunter began searching about, and found a trail of a single horse leading off from the camp. He followed it.

The first trail was of a shod horse, and was the horse he was riding.

He called the boys to follow him, and taking the back track for two miles, they came upon a dead horse and a dead Indian. The Indian held an empty rifle in his hand. But ten or fifteen steps away lay the body of a dead white man. An empty rifle lay under him, and he held an empty revolver in his hand. It was easy to conceive that they had killed each other.

Both were shot down at about the same time.

The horse sniffed the dead man in an almost mournful manner.

"Boys, herè's a chance for arms," said the old hunter.

They had now two rifles and four revolvers, and two knives, with plenty of ammunition. The Indian had pursued the white man, and both had fallen.

The Indian was perhaps not missed by his comrades, or they thought he had gone on to their camp.

They took the rifles, revolvers, knives, and ammunition.

"Now, lads, ef we hed one more gun we'd be almost as well heeled as we war when we first started out," said old Yellowstone.

They shot a buck that evening, and had an excellent feast.

It's useless to say their spirits rose. They felt the highest degree of satisfaction, and made an effort to get on the case of the incident.

They traveled all next day, and at night were in a thick woods which grew along the banks of a stream. They saw lights ahead some two or three hundred yards.

Carefully dismounting, they tied their horses to trees near together, and stole through the darkness until a considerable Indian camp was in sight.

"Look off thar to the right," whispered Yellowstone Kelly. The boys did so, and beheld the fair captives again.

CHAPTER XIII.

A FIGHT IN THE DARK.

"Jest keep still, boys—retain yer linen, whatever ye do," cautioned Yellowstone Kelly, in a whisper. "We're jest about whar we war, ye know, two or three nights ago, when we went on a wolf chase."

"They are there, they are there!" said Tom, in a hoarse whisper.

"Yaas, we know they ar' thar, and so ar' the pesky redskins. Now, be senserble, and keep yer eyes peeled."

"We are on the lookout."

"Them Injuns are cunnin'."

"I know it; but we must rescue the girls in some way."

"It can't never be done except by sarcumvention. Ye can't go in lemons-like. I would ef one o' ye war Kit Carson and t'other Buffalo Charlie. We would jest go in then and clean it a hundred or two. And ye must mind we've never used these 'ere weapons we've got, and we don't know how the thing 'd pan out, as the miners say."

The boys were silent a moment, and then Tom said:

"Can't we get in a little closer?"

"I reckon; I don't know, though, but what I'd better go alone and let 'em stay behind."

The boys pleaded to be allowed to accompany him.

"Waal, ef ye think ye kin go in here perfectly alone, an' not a nothin', it don't make no difference what ye do, come on."

The boys promised.

Then, with all that would not care and could not wait, they set out, Yellowstone Kelly leading the way, and imitated by Tom and Hank.

They had advanced about a hundred yards, when Yellowstone Kelly stopped. His experience and skill told him it was suicide to think of advancing further with the inexperienced boys.

"It won't do," he whispered. "It'll jest spile the hull thing again. You fellers must wait here in this ravine, and I'll crawl on to kinder see how the land lays. Unless this calf is fooled, both them chiefs, Turtle and Big Cow, are thar, and it's goin' to be no easy matter to git the gals."

"Oh, don't condemn us to stay here!" said Hank, pathetically.

"Got to do it," said the old hunter, shaking his head dubiously. "Sorry for it, but it can't be helped. We've got to manage things right, or we'll not rescue them gals at all. There mustn't be any foolishin' now, or the game is spiled, sure and sartin."

The young men had learned to put the most implicit confidence in the old hunter. His word had become law with them. Though headstrong and reckless, the youths wouldn't have paused a moment on account of themselves, yet when they took into consideration the danger the girls would be placed in, they determined to obey the experienced veteran.

The ravine they had halted in was deep and dark, with large trees growing around upon the banks, and even down into the bottom of the ravine. Yellowstone Kelly, cautioning the boys not to stir unless they should hear the signal given by him, started up the hillside.

Slowly and carefully he advanced. Every moment he was more cautious, for as he rose higher up the hill he was getting nearer and nearer the Indian camp. The rifle he carried in his hand carefully, as though he expected an attack at any moment; in fact, he might. If the Indians had any suspicion of an enemy being near, they would be sending out individual scouts to prow about through the woods and pounce down upon them unawares.

From tree to tree, back to back, he slipped noiselessly, keeping his eyes on the camp below him. The night was intensely dark. The moon shone through a cloud, dimly lighting up the more open spaces in the woods, but failing to penetrate the darker shadows at all.

"Confound the pesky varmints," growled the hunter softly to himself, as he kept his rifle at a readiness and his keen gray eye penetrated the darkness.

Now he pauses and crouches close to the ground. He has discovered a dark object directly before him. So motionless it stood that one less experienced than he might have mistaken it for an old snag or stump of a tree.

But there was something in that rigid upright form which told the experienced hunter that it was neither a bush nor stump.

Crouching low in the underbrush and waiting, he looked long and eagerly at the tall, stark, motionless form before him. He discerned the dim outlines of the figure, and more bold, until he could plainly see the short barrel of a rifle in his hand.

He could now even see the profile of a man, and the black lines, and prominent forehead. The figure seemed to rise from his head and sprang out with a flash into the general darkness.

But now the moon came out from behind a cloud, plainly illuminating everything. The black, devilish eyes of the painted warrior shone with the fires of a demon.

"Damn that pesky redskin, I wonder ef he has seed me? Guess not," said Yellowstone Kelly to himself.

Slowly and carefully the Indian turned about, and once more all became dark, for the moon retreated behind a cloud darker than any of the others which had yet screened it.

Yellowstone Kelly was a man of no little courage and resources.

He had resolved upon a plan, which, in his opinion, no operation had not its equal in any precedent.

Placing his rifle at the root of a tree, he rose to his feet. Laying his hand on his knife, he drew it from its belt. It was too dark for the light of that glittering blade to be observed. Could a man be so bold as to attack a man who could be betrayed.

The Indian was still motionless. Had his suspicions been aroused, and was his quick ear listening for some other sound to assure him of the presence of the enemy? The very uprising of a body, the rustling of a garment or creaking of a joint, be it ever so slight, is sufficient to be heard by the savage.

But the hunter had risen so slowly and carefully that he had not made any noise at all. The Indian gazed off into darkness, and was caught and puzzled.

"Dod rot the fool boys," thought Yellowstone Kelly, as his quick ear caught the faintest sound of their whisperings. "They are goin' to spile everything."

Oh, if it were just only a little lighter now, that he might carefully measure the distance he would have to leap.

It did grow lighter, and he measured the distance but a moment, when, becoming assured that he had it right, he sprang with all his force on the savage.

The Indian, quick as lightning, wheeled about and seized the knife in time to prevent it being buried in his own heart.

"Gol darn yer, redskin," cried Kelly, grappling with the Indian.

A terrible fight in the darkness now ensued.

It was a fearful, silent struggle.

With his left hand the hunter clutched the Indian's throat so fiercely as to choke off any cry he might attempt to make. The Indian, in his turn, seized the wrist which held the knife. He dropped his own gun, and the two struggling men fell upon the ground, and rolled over and over, fighting and struggling with all their might and strength.

They kicked and scuffled, in turn the sky above about them, and among the dark trees. For one and then the other was on top. They fought for fire, and fought like demons.

The Indian had drawn his own knife, and was trying to stab Yellowstone Kelly.

Once more the enemy had come out from behind the clouds and he up the tree. The Indian, however, was forced to release the Indian's wrist in order to reach the wrist, and prevent the sharp blade of his knife from being inserted between his ribs. The Indian opened his mouth to give the command, but he had not time to thrust of his wrist holding the knife Yellowstone Kelly sent the point of his knife into the savage's mouth, splitting his tongue in twain from tip to root, and cutting his lower lip in two pieces.

The Indian now could not give utterance to anything. He fought and struggled with a ferocity which was terrible.

Over and over they rolled, and turned, and twisted, until the hunter was hurled with such violence against the root of a tree that he was rendered half unconscious.

With a grunt of triumph the Indian turned him over, and raising the knife above his head, with the point downward, would, beyond a doubt, have sent the keen point to his heart had not Tom suddenly sprang upon the scene, and with the butt of his rifle knocked the Indian senseless to the ground.

In a second almost the old hunter had recovered, and sprang to his feet.

"Keep kinder quiet here, lads," he whispered. Then, a moment later, added: "I guess, Tom, ye kinder laid that chap out. Ye spiled his mug, and saved me from a very embarrassin' siterwation. But the wust is to come yet."

"Kelly," said Tom, "do you think he is dead?"

"I'll see."

He knelt down by the side of the Indian, and put his hand on his head.

"Yes, he's got a hole knocked in his skull. He's dead, sure 'nuff."

CHAPTER XIV.

ANN ESCAPE.

"Kelly?" whispered Tom.

"What?"

"I hear some one."

"So do I."

"Is it Indians?"

"Not knowin', I can't say," answered the veteran hunter.

"It may be."

"More'n likely."

The old hunter had returned his knife to his belt, and unlatching the belt from the dead Indian, gave it to Hank, saying:

"Now git hold o' the Injan's gun and fixin's jest as quick as you kin. We may have thunder here in a few minits."

Hank was not slow to understand the instructions, and equally as quick to put it in execution. He was fully armed and equipped in almost no time.

"Watch, that is somethin'," said the old hunter. "We are now on as good footin' as we war when we defied these same ol' boys before. If they hev found us out an' are comin' on here, we'll gin 'em the best we got in the shop."

The old hunter only had to take three or four strides until he was at the tree where his gun stood, and he picked it up as quickly as possible, and joined his younger companions.

Click, click, click, went the gun-locks.

Hank and Hank upon an knee, and Tom and Hank were ready.

"Whist!" cautioned the hunter. "Boys—"

"Well?" Tom asked, in the same cautious whisper.

"Don't let off a gun until ye hev to; yed better be careful."

"We will not," said Tom. "You can trust us."

"I believe it. Yer got purty good narves fur kids to hev."

They could now hear in the distance the faint tread of footsteps.

Was it foes?

It must be. Surely they could not expect to find friend in that wilderness.

They listened intently, with the three dark muzzles pointed into the woods from whence the sounds seemed to come.

There was a faint whisper. Could it be the sound of a human voice, or was it the rustle of the wind among the pine trees and cones?

It was a voice. Were they Indians?

Tom and Hank had had time to lift their heads in a moment.

There was not an object in sight; but soon they might expect to catch the dark outline of fiercely painted faces, and the glancing eyes of savages anxious to avenge their fallen brave.

"H!" came a faint whisper from within the dark woods.

"Is this the path?" asked another, a little further away.

"Yes."

"Why do you stop?"

"I am afraid we are discovered, after all."

"Why?"

"There's some one ahead of us."

"Then lay still; it may be warriors returning."

Hank lowered the gun which he had pointed in the direction of the voices. Old Yellowstone understood what these voices meant, but he did not exactly know what had better be done under the circumstances.

He could only mutter to himself:

"How in the name o' creation did they come thar?"

Minutes glided away.

By extending his hands he could touch his companions. He motioned both of them to lie down upon the ground, which they did. Then he began to crawl away toward the thicket.

Soon he came to the body of the Indian. It had grown rigid in death.

Pushing it aside, he resumed his onward course. Slowly and carefully he moved forward.

Parting the grass and low, short bushes with his hand, he crawled on until he was within a few paces from the spot from where those human voices seemed to come.

Yellowstone Kelly was risking a great deal, and was well aware of it himself. Those voices might only be Indians seeking to deceive them.

HERE'S THE SECRET!

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It might be that possibly some of their members could speak the English language, and had fallen upon this plan.

But how did they know of their presence?

It might be very easily explained.

Some scout on the watch had seen them and warned the entire tribe. He resolved to listen.

A long silence ensued.

It was broken at last by a sweet, silver-like voice in the faintest whisper, saying:

"D'you hear anything?"

"When?" another asked.

"But a moment ago."

"I am not sure."

"But there it is again; it is coming right at us. Oh, I shall scream!"

"If you do all is lost."

There was utter silence.

Old Yellowstone was in a dilemma. He knew not what to do.

He was satisfied now beyond a doubt that the persons in the bushes were the fair captives, who in some remarkable manner had escaped; but what was he to do?

Suddenly he grew desperate. He heard other sounds. The pecking of a woodpecker, the hoot of an owl, or chirp of a night bird, warned him that the savages had missed their captives and were already on the search of them.

He at last resolved on a desperate plan. He lay down with his face close to the ground, and said, in a faint whisper, each time growing a little louder:

"Gals! gals! gals!"

"Oh, dear, mercy!" almost screamed Aleen.

"Come, gals, keep quiet ef ye don't want them red niggers turned loose on ye."

"Who are you?" Josie asked.

"A friend."

"A white man?"

"Yes, o' course."

"Are you alone?"

"No."

"How many are with you?"

"I've got the same two kids what tried to rescue ye, and were strapped on the hosses."

By this time Tom and Hank came forward.

"Is it the girls?" asked the delighted Tom.

"Yaas, yer bet," was the laconic response.

"How did you get away?" he asked.

"Our guards went to sleep," said Josie, "and they thought us so tired that they had taken no pains to bind us."

"And you slipped them?"

"We did."

"Where were you going?"

"We knew not where," answered Josie. "We were just

going to go on until daylight, and be as far from the camp as possible, when we came upon you."

"I am very glad we met you," said Tom. "We were going to rescue you when we came on you."

"Are you not the same men who were captured before in an attempt to rescue us?"

"Yes, we are."

"We are very thankful to you, but how did you escape from those horses on which you were lashed like so many Mazeppas?"

"It's too long a story to tell now."

"I say, kids, we must git out o' this—the derved redskins ar' comin'," said old Yellowstone, and he led them back down the hill.

Acting upon Kelly's suggestion, our friends now pushed on to get as far away from the Indian camp as possible. They succeeded in reaching a rocky ravine. Here they paused and looked around. While doing so, Kelly espied a savage standing before a sort of cavern in the rocks. He looked like a sort of chief. Kelly bade the others to lie flat on the ground and be silent, while he began to creep up on the savage. He succeeded so well that he soon had knocked the Indian on the head with the butt of his rifle and then had called the others up. They bound the Indian, and when he came to he was a very surprised savage.

They questioned him and learned he was Big Cow, a chief of his tribe. They carried him back in the cavern, after which the two boys and Kelly left the cavern for a short scout around to find out if any more savages were in the neighborhood. Finding none, they returned to the cavern to discover that the girls and the Indian were nowhere in sight, and that the thongs with which they had bound the Indian were lying on the ground.

CHAPTER XV.

TURTLE.

A short while after these men left the cavern, Aleen, who was inside the cavern with Josie, said: "I don't know, but I feel as though we were not safe here."

"We are," said Josie, with great confidence. "Here is the extra rifle left, and Tom gave me a pistol. I can defend this cavern against a dozen cowardly Indians. Why, if you shoot one of them the others will be sure to run."

"I hope so."

A slight noise was now heard in the rear of the cavern.

Aleen uttered a slight scream.

"Why do you scream?" asked the brave Josie.

"Oh, I cannot help it. What was that scrambling among the rocks back there in that dark part of the cavern?"

"It was he."

"The prisoner?"

waited for a moment of the cavern and listening for any sounds in the ravine. "Go back there and see what he is doing."

"Oh, I cannot," answered Aleen, with a shudder.

"Then let him alone," said Josie. "He can do us no harm."

Aleen and Josie waited in silence, listening for some sign or indication of her friends or enemies.

It was a terrible suspense. No wonder the girl's nerves were strained to their utmost tension.

"Josie?"

"What, Aleen?"

"I cannot see him."

Josie cast a glance back toward the cavern, and said:

"No wonder; it is too dark."

Again the girls waited. Once more they thought they heard a slight noise toward the rear of the cavern, but were not certain.

"Aleen, can you see him?" Josie asked, in a whisper.

"No—no, it's so dark back there I dare not look."

"Then never mind—he is safe."

Again the watching and waiting girls bent their attention to the front canyon.

Moments passed on. They were sure, from time to time, that they heard faint movements, as if the Indian was growing restless and trying to move about; but knowing he was so securely bound that he could not, they felt perfectly safe.

They did not see dark forms stealing in at an unknown entrance from the rear of the cavern. They did not observe one stoop over the savage prisoner, and with one stroke of a keen-bladed knife sever the bonds which held him fast. Then, four in all, dark forms glided noiselessly forward toward the watching girls. Oh, why does not one of them now look back!

"Aleen!"

"What, Josie?" asked the trembling, shuddering Aleen.

"Would you be afraid to remain here?"

"Alone?"

"Yes."

"You would not for worlds."

"Why?"

"Don't ask me. That dark-painted savage prisoner there! I would not stay with him under any consideration."

"I want to see what has happened our friends."

"Why not let me go with you?"

"One must stay!"

"Why?"

"To watch that prisoner."

"Oh, I can't!"

"I will not ask you."

"Will we both go?"

"No."

"Then stay?"

"Yes, stay, and trust in heaven and our friends."

"Oh, Josie!"

"Keep quiet."

"Do you hear them coming back?"

"Yes, I think I do."

"It may not—"

"Listen! What is that?"

It was footsteps stealing along. No upright, manly tread, but the cunning tread of a moccasined foot.

Aleen now turned about.

"Oh, hea—"

But she was not permitted to complete the sentence. Two dark forms bounded through the air, and the girls were seized. A hand was clapped over the mouth of each, and they were held down to the bottom of the cavern.

It was too much for Aleen—she fainted.

Not so with Josie Stone, however. She fought and struggled with a wild desperation. She tried to free her mouth in order that she might scream and call to her aid her friends, but she could not.

Once or twice she had actually got her mouth free, and did give vent to a loud cry, which was instantly stopped by the hand of the Indian on her mouth.

The movements of the Indians were very rapid.

The two girls were taken up and borne toward the rear part of the cavern. Aleen was very easily managed, but not so Josie. She fought and struggled with might and main to free herself from the grasp of her captors. Oh, if she could only have uttered a cry, or even a word, she would have been able to tell her friends that she could not utter a syllable, nor scarcely breathe.

The Indians hurried to the rear part of the cavern.

Here Josie Stone discovered what was unobserved by her friends in their haste. It was a natural flight of stone steps leading up a sort of natural stairway.

Up this aperture bounded the Indians, and soon came into a cavern many feet above the other.

It had evidently long been used by the Indians as a residence. They left it, went to a smaller grotto, and here the girls, once more the prisoners of the cruel savages, were left in charge of one of the Indians, while Big Cow and the other two went away.

Josie busied herself trying to restore her companion to consciousness. The Indian attended her for a few moments, and said:

"White squaw great brave."

Josie looked up in his dusky face, and thought she discovered a soft light in his dark eye.

A plan at once entered her mind. A plan which might result in the freedom of herself and friend.

Aleen began to recover, and was soon able to sit up; she did not speak. When she once more realized that she was a prisoner of the dreaded savages she bowed her head in her hands and wept.

The Indian guide looked upon her with contempt, while a soft light came in his eyes as he contemplated Josie.

"White squaw be great brave."

"Man big brave," said Josie.

"Josie!" cried Aleen.

"Quiet, Aleen," whispered Josie. "A little flattery may do a great deal of good now."

"Be silent."

"Red man great brave," said Josie.

The pride of the savage was plainly discernible.

"Red man noble," said Josie.

Again the Indian showed the swelling within his heart.

"What is the name of so illustrious a chief?"

With all the swelling pride which only an Indian can assume, he answered:

"Turtle."

CHAPTER XVI.

IN DARK DESPAIR.

"Gone!" gasped Tom.

"Gone!" groaned Hank.

"By the 'tarnal jemany whillikins, I ruther guess they've vamoosed the ranch," said old Yellowstone.

"Where are they?" asked Tom, almost fiercely.

"Aye yes, where are they?" demanded Hank, sadly.

"Durned ef I know," answered the old hunter, who was puzzled beyond all comparison.

The hunter began to reason the matter in his own mind, and was not long in coming to some definite conclusion in the matter. He found the pieces of ropes and cord which had been cut.

"Humph, humph!" he said to himself. Then his gaze wandered quickly up to the opening, where his eye caught sight of the block of stone forming the stairway to the cavern above.

"Humph—humph!" he grunted again. It was all as plain to him now as it could be made. Had he seen the Indians perform the act with his own eyes he could not have been more certain about it. Turning about, he returned to where Tom and Hank were working themselves up to a fit of despair.

"Waal, lads," he said, "d'ye know what I think o' us?"

"No," said Tom sadly.

"We're a set o' durned fools. Now; come here, an' I'll prove it to ye."

They accompanied him to the spot where they had left their captive.

"D'ye see this," said the old hunter, picking up a piece of the severed cord. "This here's been cut—cut with a knife. Now, the prisoner didn't do it himself, 'cos he had no knife to cut with, an' ef he had had, why, he was tied so

hard and fast that he could not ha' done so, even ef he'd had a knife. Some 'un else cut him loose."

For a few moments a terrible suspicion came over the young men. They could hardly believe it, and yet it might be so."

"Heaven forgive us," they thought, "if they are wrong; but yet, we must be right."

"Jest come here," said the old hunter, leading them toward the rear of the cavern, where they saw the opening and flight of natural steps which went up to another cave above.

"Yellowstone," said Tom, "you know how this came about, don't you?"

"I rather guess—I kin guess," said Yellowstone.

"How was it? How did it come about?"

"There war other Injuns up them stones thar, an' they come down here an' tuk in the gals, and cut loose Big Cow. Now, ye may say I'm a liar ef they didn't slip in here and cut loose the red nigger prisoner, steal the gals, and git away!"

"Up this stairway?" asked Tom, pointing up to the outlet and stairway.

"Yes."

"Then let's follow them."

"We will!"

"Come on."

Tom led the way, springing up the rugged rocks almost two steps at a bound.

"By jemany whillikins! ef it ain't almost impossible to keep up with them young catermounts! I guess when a feller's gal is in trouble it makes him kinder spry."

The old hunter followed, however, and when the boys had reached the dark vault above they halted.

"Well, I guess it's about as dark here ez a stack o' black cats well could be," said the old hunter.

"Yes; how are we to go on?"

The old hunter had in his pocket the flint and steel with which hunters, even in these modern days of matches, provide themselves. A flint and steel never get too wet to strike fire, but matches may.

With the flint and steel he struck a few sparks, and then gathering up some dry leaves, succeeded in igniting them.

A bright flame soon lit up a long, dungeon-like vault, with the most dense darkness at each end of it.

Lying upon the floor of the cavern were a few torches which the Indians had evidently used, for the ends of them were burned. They picked up two or three of these and ignited them.

With a torch each they began their exploration, search, and pursuit. Neither of them knew exactly where he was going.

They had not advanced far before they became aware of the fact that the cavern was growing lighter. There were several branches leading off from this main grotto and branching out into almost every direction.

One of these seemed to contain more light than any of the others. They entered it, and following upward, came into a small canyon, which seemed to be a mere fissure or split in the rock. As they entered it they caught a glimpse of a dark form just flitting out of sight.

"Whiz," came an arrow within an inch of Yellowstone's head.

Crack! went the old hunter's rifle, but he evidently fired too quick or too late, for no death-yell answered the shot.

"By thunder, lads!" cried the old hunter, in high glee, "we're gwine to hev it hot now—look out!"

Crack!

A small volley of rifle shots rang out from the rocks and cliffs around about them, and bullets came whistling down among them like hail.

"Derned bad I ain't got my gun loaded," cried the old hunter, in his vexation.

"Do you see an Indian?" Tom asked.

Scarce had he spoken ere the huge boulder behind which the Indians were hid, weighing thousands of tons, started, and began rolling down upon them. Dark despair seized our friends, for death seemed inevitable.

which rose about them. It offered safety to them, and the old hunter was not slow to avail himself of it.

"Boys, come here quick!" he cried, and seizing each by an arm, dragged them at a run into the niche, which was protected by a large, flat stone, about four feet high, and eight feet thick. They had barely time to ensconce themselves in the niche, when with a crash like a thunder-clap the great mass of rock fell into the very spot where they had been but a few moments before. The entire space was filled up, and masses of broken stone of all sizes flew out in every direction, emitting showers of sparks. Fragments of rock struck all about our friends, and one or two of the smaller bits struck them, inflicting trifling bruises, which they did not give a moment's consideration.

"Now, by jingo," cried the old hunter, "it's all safe, an' them derned Injuns hev unklivered themselves, so we kin jest rake 'em."

They sprang from their cave and climbed upon the boulder; and turning their gaze up to the side of the mountain, saw within easy pistol-shot a score of savages standing where the boulder had been.

Three rifles came up, and three death-shots rang on the air. The effect was wonderful. The three fallen braves fell, and rolled, bouncing from crag to crag, bringing with them showers of loose earth and gravel. Their remaining companions were thrown into the wildest confusion. They gave utterance to the wildest screeches of dismay and yells of fear. A few of them discharged their rifles and arrows at the three white men, but without effect.

"Dern their ugly red hides!" roared old Yellowstone, dropping his rifle and drawing his revolvers. "We ar' goin' to make it so cussed hot for 'em now as they'll think a red-hot stove an iceberg."

Crack!

Crack! went two shots up at the redskins. There were yells and screeches plenty now.

"Fire—give 'em thunder!" roared the old hunter.

Then crack, crack, crack! rang out shot after shot, until a dense vapor had gathered about the three men in the canyon, from out of which the angry flashes of fire darted like the lightning from a thundercloud. The Indians were screaming and yelling and falling on every hand.

A few climbed up, and hurried away around the side of the mountain to a place of safety. They left their guns and weapons behind them; and ran for life. Old Yellowstone Kelly was busy among those fallen below. He had but his scalping-knife, and was tearing the dripping scalps from the Indians.

"Waal, boys!" said Yellowstone, coming up to them; his belt having quite an addition in the way of scalps, "it's a pooty good crop, ain't it?"

"Yes," said Tom Blake, shuddering in spite of himself.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the old hunter, bending over almost double. "I jest wish I may be chawed up fer buffler meat ef I've seen as much fun in a coon's age, and an old coon at that," and again he fell to laughing, shaking himself and rolling from side to side. "Jest to think o' them infernal cusses comin' rollin' down head over heels in that way—ha, ha, ha! They jest made the finest figger a-rollin', an' pitchin', an' yellin', an' cussin' in Injun—he, he, he!"

Tom and Hank having both reloaded their rifles and pistols, were not a little amazed at the apparent carelessness of the hunter whom they had always found so prudent. The former, at last unable longer to endure the apparent carelessness and slowness of the hunter, said:

"Yellowstone, why do you laugh so?"

"Becase I'm tickled," interrupted the hunter.

"But think of the danger."

"Danger o' thunder; that's all over."

"Why do you think so?"

"Ain't the derned redskins licked like all thunder, and runnin' like all creation?"

"Yes; but they may come back."

"Not much."

"Do you think so?"

"Course I know. When redskins git licked, they are the most derned bad whipped set ye ever hearn tell on in all yer lives. They won't stand then fer nothin'."

"But the girls?"

"The gals?"

"Yes."

CHAPTER XVII.

LIGHT BREAKING IN.

At this moment the quick eye of the old hunter was turned backward, and he discovered a niche in the wall of stone

"By gemany, I'd a most furgot 'em, to be sure."

"We must not forget them, then."

"No."

Yellowstone Kelly scratched his head for a few moments in a perplexed sort of way. It was evident to those who knew the old Western hunter that he was not a little puzzled.

"Yellowstone," said Tom, gravely, "what must we do?"

"Waal," said the hunter, taking from his pocket a large plug of pig-tail tobacco, "I rather guess the best thing to do is to find them gals."

"Of course; but just how will we do it?"

"Do it?—why, that's the question what puzzles me a bit."

"Suppose we start out and hunt?"

"I guess it's all we can do."

"Can't you form no conclusion as to what we had best do?"

"No; them gals are hid in some infernal hole about hyar somewhat," said the old hunter to his younger companions. "There 'ere smooth rock floors don't leave any more trail than if they'd flewed through the air."

"Well, let us not linger."

"Ye mustn't be in too big a hurry. Dern it, let a feller git down a big think, won't yer?"

"Can't we follow them?"

"May be."

"Some are wounded."

"'Spect so."

"They'll leave a trail of blood."

"Whoop—by jingo, old boy, gin me yer hand," cried Yellowstone Kelly, seizing our hero's hand; "you are jest worth a dozen other sich fellers to reason about anything o' that kind—why, ye lit it. Course they'll leave the very best kind o' a trail which is easy to foller and can't be covered up."

In his enthusiasm he had taken up his gun to go.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSION.

Josie Stone took hope when she saw what control she had over her ducky guard. She flattered him in every conceivable manner, and sounded his courage and the magnificence of his form in language which set the savage wild with delight.

"Most noble Turtle," said Josie, at last, "bravest of the brave, will you not consent to fly with us?"

Like many of his pale-faced brothers of society, the red-skin was as pliable in the hands of Josie Stone as if he had been clay in the hands of the potter.

"Come on," said Josie, rising.

They left the cavern which was to form a temporary prison.

He went before, cautiously inspecting the way, and taking each step with the utmost caution. Like everybody else, Turtle liked to be called what he was not. He wanted to be called brave, while in reality he was a most infamous coward.

They came out upon a small plateau, and halted. To their ears came the distant report of rifles.

"Josie—Josie!" whispered Aleen, pale and trembling.

"Be quiet, Aleen."

"I cannot."

"You must."

"It is our friends."

"Hush! do not rouse his suspicion," said Josie, in a whisper, nodding her head toward the savage.

"But they are in danger."

"So are we. We must depend upon our woman's wits now to save us."

The Indian lover was evidently annoyed by this firing. Afraid alike of friend and foe, he turned about and led the girls around a spur of the hill. Suddenly they came in full view of a canyon, in which were three men battling with a score of Indians up among the boulders on the mountain-side. They witnessed the descent of the great boulder which came so near crushing the white men.

Aleen uttered a shriek, which was drowned by the thunder of the whirling mass of rock, and swooned. Josie, who had better control of her nerves, concealed her outward emotion, and with infinite joy saw the white men save themselves by falling into a niche.

Aleen recovered herself before the fight which followed was over.

"Go, go, go!" cried Turtle, as he saw the savages on the retreat, and knew they would come that way. He dragged Aleen back with him, Josie following at his side, behind a clump of cedar.

They had scarcely ensconced themselves there before there came a crashing rush, and an Indian covered with blood rushed up to where they were and fell at the feet of the Turtle. In a moment they had recognized him as Big Cow.

Turtle's resolution was taken in a moment. He drew his scalping-knife and drove it to the wounded Indian's heart. A few gasping sobs, and he was dead. The girls shuddered, and Aleen, growing dizzy, once more swooned away.

Under pretense of wishing to get some water to restore her, Josie Stone left her and went around the point of rocks so that she could see the three hunters following the trail of blood. Taking her apron off she waved it in the air so as to attract their attention. In a few moments she saw she was recognized, then warning them as best she could of danger, she hastened back to the unsuspecting savage.

Aleen had recovered sufficiently, and she suggested that they go forward a few rods to the edge of the precipice to enjoy fresh air and be away from the scene. The savage, like many another man, was urged on to his ruin. He was sitting on the edge of the precipice between the two girls.

Josie was nearest him. She cast a look behind her, and saw the face of old Yellowstone Kelly peering out of the very thicket of cedars they had just quitted. The hunter motioned to her to sit over a little, which she did, under the excuse of plucking a wild flower. A second later a sharp report rang out on the air, and with a gasping cry the Indian plunged head forward down into the rocky gorge. Josie sprang up and seized Aleen in her arms, for fear she would again swoon and fall down among those sharp-pointed, cruel rocks on which lay the mangled form of the Indian. But Aleen did not faint, though her head grew dizzy and things swam before her eyes.

The shouts of well-known voices could be plainly heard, and in another moment the happy girls were each clasped in a warm embrace, while old Yellowstone Kelly, who stood a short distance away, was leaning on his gun, saying:

"Now chew me up fur buffler meat of this ain't jest about the finest thing what I've seed yet. It seems to me quite roomantic—I swow it do!"

Explanations were few and easily made. The adventures were told by each, and in a few moments all was thoroughly understood.

"I hate it a'most dorned bad to lose that cuss's scalp, but I ain't a-goin' to climb down in that 'ar hole to git it," said old Yellowstone Kelly.

They went back to the thicket of cedar, where old Yellowstone contented himself by lifting the scalp of Big Cow.

They found the horses, and got out of the valley without much difficulty. There were several Indian horses loose, and our friends captured two of them; they had horses for each. The Indians did not molest them any more, and they continued down the Yellowstone to Fort John. There they found many anxious letters of inquiry about Tom, Hank, Josie, and Aleen.

Tom and Hank's parents were anxiously inquiring about them, and the friends and relatives of the girls, whose parents had been murdered, were anxious to know what their fate had been.

"Waal, I guess we'll part here," said old Yellowstone to the boys, a day or two before their departure for the settlement. "We had a good time, but I'd like to hev them couple of weddin's come off afore ye leave. I s'pect it's goin' to come off. It's all arranged, anyway, an' why not hev it while I kin enjoy it?"

The boys consented, if the girls could be induced to hasten matters. The girls consented, and the next day there was a double wedding by the fort chaplain. Tom and Josie were one couple, and Hank and Aleen were the other.

The boys, with their brides, have lived happily for many years in the land of civilization, but they will never forget their adventures in the West with Yellowstone Kelly.

Next week's issue will contain "THE POISONED WINE; OR, FOILING A DESPERATE GAME."

FROM ALL POINTS

CALF MISTOOK AN AIRPLANE FOR A CHICK-EN HAWK

Thomas Gerloch, farmer, near Redding, Cal., is grieving over the death of what he asserts was the most valuable calf in California. The calf was permitted to roam at will over the farm because it protected the chickens against hawks, says Gerloch.

Every time a hawk would flash down from the sky to grab off a chicken, the calf was on the job, ready to fight off the hawk.

One day lately Lieut. Goodrich, from San Francisco, was flying over the farm in an airplane when his engine went dead, and he was forced to land. The calf, had been watching the great plane, apparently believing it some new sort of hawk, bent on a hen raid.

As the plane landed the calf dashed up. The propeller still was spinning. Before Lieut. Goodrich could leap to the ground and chase the animal away, the calf had butted the machine in the nose.

HIS PITCHER BANK CRACKED FOR \$2,000

When George Mamayie, forty years old, was aroused by a noise in his furnished room at No. 58 Little Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., the other day, he thought of the \$2,000 he had concealed in a water pitcher under the bed and let out a yell. A blow on the head stunned him.

His cry aroused other roomers in the house and they chased to the street two men who had been in Mamayie's room, but lost track of them. Detective Brickley of the Poplar Street Station a short time later met a man in his stocking feet at Washington and Sands Streets and arrested him. He proved to be Joseph Unavich, twenty-three, Mamayie's roommate, but he didn't have the \$2,000, which Mamayie had discovered was gone.

Mamayie, after being treated at the Brooklyn hospital, was able to return home. He and Unavich were employed at the Arbuckle refinery. He said he carried his \$2,000 savings in a bag around his waist in the daytime and always kept it in the old pitcher under the bed at night.

BOOZE WATCHED BY 6 ARMED GUARDS

Guards armed with automatic rifles are keeping constant watch over wine cellars in the homes of wealthy residents of Nassau County, New York. It became known recently. One man, whose summer home is just outside the village of Oyster Bay, has six guards.

Their job is to sit in the wine cellar with the cases and barrels there stored with guns ready.

They work in pairs on eight-hour shift, and get \$75 a month and their board. Two women have been installed in the servants' quarters to cook for them.

Another residence is equipped with a new cellar of reinforced concrete. Entrance is possible only through a 3-inch steel door. There are fourteen barrels in this cellar, and the walls are lined with bottles. Four armed men guard it day and night, although it would take a cracksmen some time to break in even if undisturbed.

Positive knowledge is had of where more than \$500,000 worth of liquid cheer is stored in and near Oyster Bay. Estimates are that the alcoholic beverages in cellars thereabouts far exceed that sum.

One man who has a cellar that cost him upward of \$150,000 to stock said yesterday that he would carry two flasks—one of Scotch and one of rye—so that he and his friends would not be entirely parched during necessary separations from their cellars.

CANADA IS NOW MINING EPSOM SALTS

A new industry has been started in Canada, that of mining Epsom salts, writes Felix S. S. Johnson, United States Consul at Kingston, Ontario. The discovery of large deposits of these salts was made a few years ago in British Columbia, but it is only now that they are being marketed to any extent in Canada. The deposits are located in a chain of five lakes near Basque, British Columbia.

The formation of these deposits is particularly interesting. The surface of the salt lake is a mass of hard, white crystal. Slabs of salt are cut out by saws similar to those used in ice harvesting. Underneath this hard crystal is a liquid of the same chemical nature, which, when it oozes up and comes in contact with the sun and air, becomes hard and can be cut into slabs just the same as the top surface. The investigation shows that the deposits are at least forty feet deep, and an analysis by a Government chemist shows that the salts are practically 100 per cent. pure magnesium sulphate.

The lakes are of the basin variety and are in the dry belt, where the combined rain and snow fall does not exceed five inches annually. The deposits are covered with water from six inches to one foot from the last of March until June or July. The hot, dry summer winds evaporate the water very rapidly, and during most of the year the magnesium sulphate may be removed easily. The salts occur in solidified masses of varying shapes and sizes, surrounded by mud rings.

And Consul Jesse H. Johnson writes from Regina, Saskatchewan, describing some newly developed mines of Glauber's salts, of which about 9,000,000 tons are in sight.

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

OPAL FEAR VANISHES

The superstition associating the opal with bad luck is rapidly disappearing, according to dealers, and this beautiful gem is now in the high tide of popularity.

Few people realize the tremendous demand appearing for Australian opals. The world has never seen more gorgeous gems than the fire opals mined in the Lightning Ridge district of New South Wales which flush with fire in all the colors of the rainbow. For years the finest opals in these fields were gobbled by representatives of London and their European agents in the field.

Competition is so spirited that it has placed gem opals in the same class as most precious stones as far as price is concerned. They bring from \$200 to \$2,000 apiece and are bought up so rapidly that the supply is not equal to the demand.

BAKING BY ELECTRICITY

The ordinary rise in the prices of fuel caused by the war has considerably furthered baking by electricity, although a great many electric bake ovens existed in Norway, Sweden and Switzerland before the outbreak of hostilities. The cheapness of coal at that time was not conducive to the bakeries taking up electric baking, in spite of the fact that in those countries which possess water power, baking by electricity is of considerable economic importance, as the employment of electric ovens permits the utilization of superfluous electric energy which usually cannot be made use of during the night. The night energy can be supplied by hydroelectric power stations at such cheap rates as to make the use of electric ovens much more economical than those heated by coal or steam.

FIREPROOF TIMBER PROCESS PATENTED

A process has been made public in England by which timber is made fireproof. A company has been formed, known as the Timber Fireproofing Company, which claims that the use of the process will tend to avoid the risk of fire in houses built of wood.

The process known as the oxylene fireproofing process consists of submitting the wood in a closed cylinder to a steaming and vacuum treatment, which removes the air moisture in the pores of the wood and vaporizes the sap water. The wood is then impregnated under hydraulic pressure with a solution of fire-resisting chemicals, which replace the elements driven out by the preliminary treatment. Finally the water of the solution is dried off, and the chemicals in minute crystal form remain embodied in the fibres.

The effect of this treatment is explained as being

that on the application of heat the crystals expand and form a glossy coating, which excludes the oxygen of the air and prevents its combination with wood, thus rendering flame an impossibility. The higher the temperature, the more the crystals expand, and though in time the chemical action of each crystal becomes exhausted and the wood becomes charred fresh crystals come into play, and though the wood may eventually be charred completely through, no flame will be generated.

Wood treated this way does not differ in appearance from wood that has not been treated, and it is claimed that it does not deteriorate, and is not affected by atmospheric conditions.

SEA LEATHER WILL CUT THE COST OF FOOTWEAR

Everybody is painfully aware of the scarcity and high price of leather. The war, of course, took a heavy direct toll of the leather production of the world and in addition indirectly reduced the supplies by the steady diminution of the world's flocks and herds from which our leather usually comes.

The sea, however, said a British writer, holds an almost inexhaustible source of leather in the larger aquatic creatures—whales, sharks, porpoises, dog-fish, the ray or devil-fish, the saw-fish, and some others. We are already in this country acquainted with certain forms of whale and porpoise leather.

The well-known "Belgua" belting is obtained from the white whale, an animal which attains a length of over 18 feet, with a girth of as much as 12 feet. There have, however, been difficulties in the way of utilizing these sources on any large scale, for the production of leather suitable for general purposes.

The shagreen or outer coating of the skin of the shark, for example as well as those of the ray and of the dog-fish, is a horny structure frequently so hard that it is difficult to strip it off, while grinding, if carried far enough to remove it entirely, results in partial destruction of the skin proper.

Necessity, however, has again proved the mother of invention and chemical means have been devised by which this horny material may be successfully removed; while improvements in lining now permit that part of the process of tanning to be carried through without injury to the skin. A further step has succeeded in removing the fishy odor which would otherwise remain in the finished product. In the circumstances it is not surprising to learn that new stations for the treatment of these sea products are being established on the southern Atlantic shores of the United States, where many of the creatures named abound.

INTERESTING ARTICLES

HONOLULU TO HAVE \$1,000,000 BUILDING

A \$1,000,000 contract for the construction of a Federal building here has been secured by Robert Atkinson, president of the Hawaiian Contracting Company. Mr. Atkinson recently returned from Washington, D. C., where he secured the contract, outbidding the Salt Lake Construction Company.

Hawaii has been waiting ten years for the Federal building, which will house the Federal courts, post office, internal revenue and customs departments of the Government here.

It was announced that work would commence at once on the excavation for the foundation of the building, to be located directly opposite the Iolani Palace of the Kamehaneka dynasty of Hawaiian Kings, now used as the Territorial Government building or capitol.

TOURING ON BOILING LAKE

One of the unusual experiences provided by the New Zealand Government Tourist Bureau for visitors to New Zealand is a launch ride across one of the larger boiling lakes in the thermal region of the North Islands. This lake is called Rotomahana, which is the native Maori name for "warm lake."

As the launch glides across the surface huge clouds of steam rise in the wake of the boat and because of the peculiar opaque green color of the water makes a most weird effect.

For a hundred feet or more from the shore, the water is extremely hot, but in the centre the lake is only lukewarm because of the great depth of the water. Wild ducks frequent the centre of the lake but always seem to know just where to alight with comfort.

BILLY SUNDAY SPEEDS BARLEYCORN TO GRAVE

"Billy" Sunday preached a John Barleycorn funeral service in Norfolk, Va., before an audience of more than 10,000 persons which attended mock obsequies. The ceremony began at the railroad station where the "corpse" in a coffin twenty feet long arrived on "a special train from Milwaukee." Twenty pall bearers placed the coffin on a carriage and marched beside it through the streets to Sunday's tabernacle, while His Satanic Majesty trailed behind in deep mourning and anguish.

At the tabernacle door Sunday met the cortege with a delighted grin. The Devil, wearing a mask and simulating a state of deep dejection, sat with the mourners.

"Good-by, John" said the evangelist at the end of his sermon. "You were God's worst enemy; you were Hell's best friend. I hate you with a perfect hatred; I love to hate you."

25 FIRES SET BY BOY GANG

Three boys in their teens, arrested recently during a fire at No. 462 Knickerbocker Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y., confessed setting twenty-five fires in different parts of Brooklyn in the last three months for the purpose of robbery. The police say they can fix fifty Brooklyn fires in the same period on the trio.

The boys confessed they worked Saturday and Sunday nights, usually at dinner hour, in tenement houses, because there was likely to be plenty of money around at those times. They saturated stuff in the cellar with oil, set fire to it, and when the tenants rushed from the house the boys ran upstairs and grabbed all the money and jewelry lying loose. They told of getting \$38 in one house, \$5 in another and various pieces of jewelry. They spent the money on movies, candy and cigarettes.

PEARL SHORTAGE

Since large pearls are no longer found in the semi-exhausted fisheries of the Orient and the world is confronted with a shortage of one of its most ancient and highly prized gems, dealers in the American market are looking hopefully to the development of the pearl fishing industry in Lower California and on the Venezuelan coast.

The Venezuelan government has begun a close supervision over its pearl fisheries and a conservation of their output. The pearl oyster beds are located at Margarita Island, Cubagua, El Tirano, Pear-lamar, Maracapaná, Matanao and Golfo de las per-las. When Columbus discovered the mainland of South America in 1498, he found the Indians working these beds in the hands of the Spaniards, the pearl coast became famous for its wealth in these gems off the sea. When L'Ollonois, Roc Brazilliano and Sir Henry Morgan were sweeping the Spanish Main with the piratical jolly rover at their masthead, the pearl fisheries were frequently plundered.

In the pearling season to-day, 499 vessels and 2,000 divers work along the coast and among the islands. The annual product of Marguarita Island alone is valued at \$600,000. An immense pearl with an estimated value of \$100,000 was found at Margarita in 1579 and presented to King Philip of Spain. The Venezuelan pearls are of good orient and color and are noted for their number of baroques or irregularly shaped pearls.

Perhaps the richest pearl fisheries in America lie along the west coast of the Gulf of California from La Paz to the Island of Loreto and around Tiburon across the gulf on the Mexican coast. Pearls are also found in some abundance on both the eastern and western coasts of Mexico, Nicaragua and Puerto Rico. The Pearl Islands off the coast of Panama have been famous for their pearls for centuries.

The Midnight Shadow

OR

THE MYSTERY OF THE SEVEN STEPS

By WILLIAM WADE

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XI.

Dick Ketchum Tries to Catch the Midnight Shadow and Fails.

"Young woman," he said in a faltering tone as he came inside, shut the door, and planted his back against it, "in heaven's name who are you, and how came you in this place?"

"Don't ask me!" cried Fanny, "for I can't tell you. But I know who you are, all right. You are Oliver Newman's boss, Henry Grady. I am Fanny Filmore, Oliver's girl. I'm sure you won't harm me."

"Harm you!" cried the old man. "I wouldn't hurt a hair of your head, but—"

He paused and looked steadily at Fanny.

"Let me out, Mr. Grady. I want to go home!" pleaded Fanny.

"That is just the trouble," said Henry Grady, slowly. "Now that you have come in here I can't let you out. Oh, why did you ever come?"

"Oliver, you go up on the other side and speak to Grady with the width of the street between you," said Dick Ketchum hastily. "I'm going for the Shadow, and I'm going to get him, too."

"But if he attacks me?" faltered Oliver the timid.

"Here, take this revolver," replied Ketchum, and he handed out the weapon.

"I could never use it," protested Oliver. "I wouldn't shoot Mr. Grady for the world."

"For goodness sake, stop your kicking! You need not shoot. It may be the means of saving your life if you merely threaten him. Will you go or not?"

"I will go and do my best," replied Oliver, and off he went.

His eyes were fixed upon the advancing figure. The man was walking very much more rapidly than Oliver had ever seen his boss walk.

Still, it looked like him.

With no desire to repeat his former experience, Oliver kept as close to the wall as he could when he reached it.

Meanwhile Dick Ketchum was striking for the top of the ledge on the side where the Midnight Shadow stood.

It was necessary to make a considerable detour in order to get there, and Oliver soon lost sight of his companion.

He now saw that the approaching man was indeed Henry Grady.

He was as usual when seen at the midnight hour, smoking a cigar.

His coat was thrown wide open, and his hat tipped back on his head.

In spite of his rapid gait, he walked with an uncertain step. It could not exactly be called a stagger, and yet it was something that way.

Meanwhile the Shadow still stood on top of the rocks, watching his approach.

Then, suddenly as the old man drew near, the Shadow gave a peculiar cry!

Oliver hurried on.

He wanted to get up opposite the place where the Shadow stood before Henry Grady.

But in this he was not successful.

When he reached this point the old jewelry peddler suddenly stopped, and turned face to the rocks.

Then a very singular thing happened.

The moon made it as bright as day, and Oliver saw it all with perfect clearness.

Suddenly the Shadow dropped flat on the rocks, and leaned far over the edge.

He said something which Oliver could not catch.

Then Henry Grady reached up with both hands as high as he could.

The other reached down with his, and clutching Grady's hands, pulled the heavy old man up with perfect ease, apparently.

At the same instant Oliver saw Dick Ketchum, bending low, revolver in hand, creeping towards the Midnight Shadow.

Up went Henry Grady until he was able to get his knees on top of the ledge, which at this point could not have been over twelve feet high.

Dick Ketchum was almost upon them, but as yet neither seemed to have perceived him.

Gaining his feet, Henry Grady walked back out of sight.

The Shadow glided after him, and Dick, instead of closing in at once, glided after the Shadow.

"Oh, why didn't he jump in and arrest the man!" thought Oliver.

He did not stop to think that the detective was no more anxious to get into trouble than himself.

"I've made a mess of it again," thought Oliver.

He stood uncertain for a minute, and then ran back between the ledges, feeling that he ought to join the detective and help him if he needed help.

Then all at once a shot rang out.

Another instantly followed.

Then came a wild, unearthly cry, after which all was still.

Oliver ran on to the end of the street.

He was just turning into the lots on his right, which direction would have taken him up the hill, when a policeman sprang out from behind a clump of bushes and grabbed him, wrenching away the revolver which Oliver still carried exposed in his hand.

(To be continued.)

Bob, the Ice King

OR

OUT TO FIND THE POLE

By J. P. RICHARDS

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER X.

On to the Cave.

"How many of them do you make, Sandy?" questioned Bob, for Sandy seemed to be better able to see at a distance in the moonlight than anyone else.

"I count thirteen, Bob," was the reply.

"The unlucky number," said Thyra.

"Unlucky for them or for us?" questioned Bob.

"It is indeed a question," added Ike. "All we can do is to be on our guard. We don't want to pick a quarrel with the Esquimaux."

"These may not be the same bunch," said Bob.

"The chances are all the other way," retorted Ike.

"They acted to me like people who never saw a white man."

"I am entirely of your opinion," said Thyra. "That there are such tribes over in this section, which is practically unexplored, is well known, although my father did not happen to meet with any of them when he was here. However, the Esquimaux are poor fighters in any case. I don't think we have anything to fear."

"My fear is for you," said Bob, "and I do wish you would go into your tent, Thyra."

"Which I certainly shan't," replied Thyra. "Whatever peril is coming our way I am determined to take my share of it."

"They must have seen white people before," put in Sandy. "If it wasn't so they would have been so scared by the report of our guns that they never would have dared to follow us up."

"You can't tell," said Ike. "They may have had some powerful reason for wanting that fellow out of the way."

"If they are all concerned in it," added Thyra. "It may be just a quarrel between brothers, you know."

To which Ike made no reply, and they awaited the enemy's approach in silence.

As the Esquimaux drew nearer it was seen that they were armed only with their spears.

"They must be made to declare their intentions," said Bob. "Can't you call to them, Thyra, and ask what they want. They are near enough now to hear you."

"I'll try it," replied Thyra. "I only hope they can understand me. They may speak some dialect, you know."

She called out a bunch of gibberish, as it seemed to her companions.

Instantly the advance was stopped, and the man came forward holding his spear reversed, with the point downward towards the snow.

"That means flag of truce," said Thyra. "He wants to talk."

"He must have understood you all right, then," replied Bob. "What did you say?"

"Asked him whether they came as friends or enemies, and what they wanted."

The man came on to about a hundred yards of the tents, and then, plunging the point of his spear into the snow, began to talk.

Thyra answered him, and they held quite a conversation, all of which was perfectly unintelligible to Bob, who had picked up a little of the Esquimaux language as spoken along the Greenland Coast.

"He speaks a different dialect from anything I ever heard," said Thyra, after a minute. "I can scarcely understand him, but he seems to understand me all right. He says the man we have is a wizard, and bewitched one of his brothers and killed him. He was condemned to death, and another brother was ordered to act as executioner. That's about the way I make it out. I may not have it quite right, though."

"Do they want us to give him up?" demanded Bob.

"He says we must, or they will make us."

"Then I say no!"

"Same here," added Ike. "If it's fight it's fight. I'll stand by the man to the last."

His manner was singularly fierce, but he cooled right down and added:

"What's to be done? He seems to be waiting for an answer, and I am waiting to get back to my patient."

"Can I see him?" inquired Thyra.

"Yes certainly. Wait. I will call you in a minute."

He vanished inside the tent.

Thyra called out something to the Esquimaux, who waved his hand in reply.

"I told him I would let him know in a minute," she said to Bob.

"Come!" called Ike, raising the flap of the tent. Thyra went in, and was gone but a few minutes.

"He wants to stay with us," she said. "He admits that he killed his brother. Says it was an accident. The man died of poison which had been mixed for a sick dog. That's his story."

"I say what the rest of you say," declared Bob.

"I'm a Greenlander," said Thyra. "I cannot send any man to certain death."

"He stays and we fight for him if necessary!" cried Ike.

Nobody asked Sandy for his opinion, which was certain to be the same as Bob's.

(To be continued.)

PLUCK AND LUCK

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

Wildcats have killed six large buck deer in Kaul Park, at Trout Run, near St. Mary's, Pa. The carcasses of the deer have been found on the preserve and from indications it is believed many more of the animals have met the same fate, Kaul Park, which is one of the finest game preserves in the State, is now the scene of a big hunt for the cats. Two have been shot but many others have been able to escape the hunters. Dogs used to trail them have been killed.

John Bridgewater of the high school football team Beaver City, Nebraska, after a game the other day felt a sharp pain in his right knee. He could not determine the cause, but as the hours passed and the pain grew worse he went to a physician. An X-ray showed an obstruction in the knee. Bridgewater then recalled that he had been stabbed by a catfish when swimming last summer. Until after the game he had not been bothered. The physician removed the horn of the fish.

In connection with the efforts being made by American manufacturers to increase their sales in China, it is worth while to note the success attained by the large department stores in Canton and Shanghai. These establishments have introduced the fixed-price system of merchandizing with excellent results, and their large trade in foreign goods has induced most of the other native stores to carry imported lines. A chain of U. S. department stores in the principal cities of China would be of incalculable benefit to American trade generally. They would display an unlimited number of different lines, exclusively American, and the advantage of goods new to the Chinese market could be explained.

A discussion of "The Postage Stamp as a Possible Source of Infection" by J. Diner and G. Horst-

man appears in the Medical Times for October, 1919. The writers obtained postage stamps from fifty different places, note, being made in each case whether the stamps were kept exposed on the desk or held for sale in a drawer or cash register. Laboratory tests showed that no stamp was free from germs. Twenty of them contained colonies too numerous to count. Among the germs were colon bacilli, staphylococci, streptococci, pneumococci and diptheroid bacilli. Apparently there was little difference in bacterial content between the stamps exposed on the desk and those kept in drawers. The amount of danger presented by these organisms cannot be stated, as unfortunately, no tests were made to determine the virulence of the germs. In commenting on these results, American Medicine, while not encouraging the common practice of moistening stamps with the tongue, points out that if stamps were a grave source of infection a very large percentage of the population would undoubtedly be suffering from infections due to this cause. The fact is that most oral cavities will reveal the presence of some or all of the organisms above mentioned whether stamps have been licked or not.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

"What's the new cook so amused over?" "She's looking at the diploma I got at the cooking school," faltered the bride. "I hung it in the kitchen."

"Hello, old man. I hear you are going to marry Miss Swift. I congratulate you on your good taste." "Oh, that's all off. Not going to marry at all." "Congratulations on your good sense."

Mrs. Jones—Oh, dear, I have just broken my new smelling bottle! Mr. Jones—It is like you! All your belongings are either broken or shattered. Mrs. Jones—Quite true, John! Even you are a bit cracked!

"There's a fasting man who has been living for forty-five days on water." "That's nothing. My father lived for twenty years on water." "Go on!" "Yes; he was a sea captain."

She—I'm going to give you back our engagement ring. I love another. He—Give me his name and address. She—Horrors! Do you mean to go and kill him? He—No, I want to sell him the ring.

Bacon—What are these "oil gushers" we read so much about in the newspapers nowadays? Egbert—Didn't you ever see one? "Well, no. Did you?" "Sure! If you'd been here ten minutes ago you would have seen one, too. He just dropped in to try and sell me some oil, look."

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

SMUGGLING DOPE

About two years ago it was found that great quantities of prepared opium were being smuggled into the Philippines, where it found a ready sale at big prices. Aside from the violation of the revenue laws, the natives, like those of China, were becoming addicted to the use of the drug and the Government determined to break up the business. Accordingly all vessels coming into the islands were subjected to a most rigid scrutiny.

By one of these unexpected twists of fate, better known as chance, the skillfully laid plot of the smugglers was exposed at the time Francis Burton Harrison went to assume his duties as the Governor-General of the Philippines. Two trunks filled with opium were found among the luggage of his party. Lest the reader fear that the distinguished Governor of the archipelago had become a lawbreaker, it may be said at once that Mr. Harrison had been made the unwitting accomplice of a gang of smugglers who took advantage of the fact that he would be extended the courtesies of the port. This is another way of saying that because of his high official position his luggage was exempt from the usual customs inspection.

There were 440 tins of the opium and it was valued at \$20,000. The drug was in a Gladstone bag and a trunk which bore the name of a distinguished member of Gov. Harrison's suite. It seems that two pieces of baggage were placed on board the *Manchuria* at Kobe, Japan, by Emilio Spatolio, who succeeded in passing himself as a servant of the incoming Governor-General. The Gladstone bag and the trunk were actually passed with the other baggage.

It was after this shrewd bit of smuggling had been accomplished that the secret service division learned the details of the scheme. The two pieces of baggage were traced to a house in the outskirts of Manila. Chief Green and two of his assistants hastened there and peering in the open window found Spatolio and a confederate taking the tins of opium from the trunk.

They burst into the house with pointed pistols and demanded the opium in the name of the law. The two crestfallen smugglers, who had been chuckling over the ease with which they had accomplished the business, surrendered without a struggle. The opium was seized and the chief culprits and their tools were duly tried and punished.

The sensational character of the arrest broke the back of the smuggling industry in the Philippines. There are occasional instances now and then, but fear of the law has reduced the crime to a minimum.

WHY THE SEA HAS DIFFERENT COLORS

"The deep blue sea!" sings the poet.

"Tommyrot!" exclaims the traveller. "It is as green as an emerald. I've seen it."

"So have I," hotly declares the poet. "It is blue."

The poet and the traveller are in about the same position as the blind men and the elephant. One felt the trunk, the other the tail, and then they quarrelled about it, although both were right—as far as they went.

The sea is both green and blue. In some places it is nearly always blue, in others it is nearly always green. Scientists declare that the quantity of salt in the water has a great deal to do with this. They point out that the more rapid the evaporation of the water from the heat of the sun, the greater amount of salt there is in the water, and that the water that is extremely salt is always blue, while the water that does not contain such a large quantity of salt is green.

This, then, would make the color of the sea a matter of geography, or temperature, which is the same, as temperature is a matter of geography. One proof of this claim is held to be the Great Gulf Stream, which flows like a river out of the hot Caribbean Sea and up through the Atlantic to the northwest, a stream greater in volume than a hundred Mississippi.

This stream of water is as blue as the sky on a fair day, while as it proceeds northward the waters of the Atlantic on either side are quite green. The temperature of the Gulf Stream is about 74 degrees, Fahrenheit, while the Atlantic through which it flows is about 50 degrees.

As this stream flows northwest it widens, and at the same time grows shallower. From a width of almost forty miles off Florida, it stretches out to a width of about eighty miles off Cape Hatteras. But it retains its blue tints. Up off Newfoundland this stream becomes so thin that the cold water breaks through in patches, and here can be seen great patches of the cold water, green in color, in the midst of the stretch of blue water.

Away in the Arctic regions and in the Antarctic also, the water is always green. Around the equator, where the heat is terrific, the water is always blue. The Mediterranean Sea is blue because its waters are warm, because it is penned up and gets constant evaporation and because very few streams of great size flow into it.

Only a few years ago a great stream of yellow water was observed near the Gulf Stream. For a month or more it was seen then it disappeared and it is believed to have been muddy water caused by some volcanic upheaval beneath the water.

GOOD READING

"JOKE" MAY CAUSE DEATH

In escaping from a room on the fifth floor of a boarding house at No. 200 Madison Avenue, New York City in which she had been locked as a practical joke, Miss Ida Durham, twenty-one years old stepped through a skylight of an adjoining roof and fell to the third floor.

An ambulance took her to New York Hospital, suffering from a sprained back and possible internal injuries.

STAG ATTACKS LAWYER

Samuel M. Ankney, an attorney, Greensburgh, Pa., has just returned home from a hunting trip in Jefferson County in which he narrowly escaped death when attacked by a stag. Separated from the rest of the party, he was standing on an old log looking for a rabbit when the stag suddenly emerged from underbrush, charged at him before he even had time to think of self-defense and knocked him down. The stag was about to renew its attack when Ankney's cries for help brought his companions. The animal, which fled into the forest, had been chased by dogs.

TAKE BULLET FROM HEART.

A surgeon at St. Joseph's Hospital, Omaha, took the heart out of Steve Zakich, an Austrian who had shot himself, removed the bullet from the heart, replaced the organ and sewed up the incision. Four days after Zakich ate solid food and is practically out of danger.

The operation was performed when the bullet had been in Zakich's heart nearly thirty-six hours. The first doctors to see the man after he had shot himself thought he would die in a few minutes. In performing the operation the surgeons cut through three ribs to reach the heart. Dr. Simanek was the chief operator.

SOAP STIRS UP GEYSERS.

Visitors to the thermal region of the Black Water Valley in New Zealand are seldom disappointed in their anticipation in seeing real geysers at work. There are hundreds of geysers throughout this region, and usually one or more of the larger ones are in play, but it so happens sometimes that they become inactive without any apparent cause and fail to perform properly, despite the fact that scores of tourists are then within the reservation.

When this happens somebody usually drops a cake of soap down the outlet of the geyser, and then there is enough action to suit all concerned.

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My Moving Picture Machine is a good one and I would not give it away for \$25.00. It's the best machine I ever had and I wish everybody could have one. Addie Bresky, Jeanesville, Pa. Box 34.

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I am slow about turning in my thanks to you, but my Moving Picture Machine is all right. I have had it a long time and it has not been broken yet. I have seen a \$12.00 Machine but would not swap mine for it. Robert Lineberry, care of Revolution Store, Greenboro, N. C.



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The Perfect Man never enjoy good health if Strongfort you have catarrh; you won't be efficient in anything as long as you have catarrh, and it detracts from your personality to be hawking and snuffing around others.

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